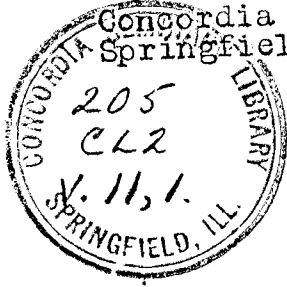


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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1005.

VOLUME XI

JANUARY, 1950

NUMBER 1

IN THIS ISSUE: St. Louis Laymen Take Issue with Seminary Faculty on "Opinion" — A Letter to President Behnken: Concerning Basic Principles of Church Fellowship — The Essence of a Synod — The Situation Confronting Us — A Substantiating Letter — Comments on the President's Letter of March 19, 1949.

● St. Louis Laymen Take Issue with Seminary Faculty on "Opinion"

In its issue of October 1, 1949, the *St. Louis Lutheran* reported an "Opinion" of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, which denies the Scriptural "position of our fathers" concerning the essence and binding nature of a valid betrothal. The opinion is summed up in the statement "Engagement not tantamount to Marriage." A number of St. Louis laymen, recognizing this denial as a mere symptom of a deeper-lying and serious disease, promptly took issue with the faculty. We herewith report an interview regard-

ing the matter between Dr. L. J. Sieck, president of the faculty, on the one side, and four laymen representing formal protest and opposition to the public faculty opinion. The copy of the interview in our possession is signed by the four laymen mentioned herein, and is being published by request of Mr. Strumpler. — P. H. B.

Conference with Dr. L. J. Sieck, President of Concordia Seminary, October 18, 1949, 8 P. M.

Mr. Strumpler: "We would like to inquire if the statement in the *St. Louis Lutheran* as of October 1, 1949, 'Engagement not Tantamount to Marriage,' truly represents your views."

THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN

Published in the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism
By the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau
(One Dollar Per Year)

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Articles intended for publication are to be addressed to
the office of publication: Box 73, Clinton, Iowa.

Subscriptions (\$1.00 per year) are to be sent to
Rev. Eldor Mueller, 910 Second Avenue, Sterling, Illinois.
Please notify us promptly of any change of address.

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910 Second Avenue, Sterling, Illinois. **Regular** membership
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Sustaining membership \$10.00 or more per year. Each type
of membership includes a subscription to the "Confessional
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TRACT DEPARTMENT: Box 4, Elizabeth, Illinois.

Dr. Sieck: "Well, substantially so, but I did not like the way it was put up in the *St. Louis Lutheran*, tying it up with the statement of some preacher, 'that nothing compels us to adhere to the position of the fathers, "Engagement is Marriage."' We did not say that."

Mr. Strumpler: "Then, Dr. Sieck, why did you not retract this in the next edition, or insist on a special edition recalling this statement?"

Dr. Sieck: "I would not stoop to answer a publication of the calibre of the *St. Louis Lutheran*."

Mr. Strumpler: "Then you do agree that it is the position of the entire faculty that engagement is not tantamount to marriage."

Dr. Sieck: "Well, we gave an opinion to a preacher setting forth a ruling on one particular case."

Mr. Strumpler: "The opinion was an all-inclusive one and not a special case. I read it."

Dr. Sieck: "No, it was not. This was a special case."

Mr. Strumpler: (Displaying photostat of faculty ruling), "Dr. Sieck, is that your signature?"

Dr. Sieck: "Where did you get that?"

Mr. Strumpler: (Standing, pointing finger at signature), "I again ask you, is this your signature?"

Dr. Sieck: "Where did you get it?"

Mr. Strumpler: "Doctor Sieck, is that your signature?"

Dr. Sieck: "Yes."

Mr. Strumpler: "You said this was a special case. Can you show me where this opinion shows to be a special case?"

Dr. Sieck: "It is an all-inclusive one."

Dr. Sieck: "But our opinion covered two pages."

Mr. Strumpler: "For the sake of economy I had it reproduced on one sheet."

Dr. Sieck: "Where did you get this?"

Mr. Strumpler: "That is inconsequential. The fact is that I have it."

Dr. Sieck: "You got this from Reverend Maschoff."

Mr. Strumpler: "Dr. Sieck, I again ask you, is this the opinion of the faculty?"

(Page Two)

Dr. Sieck: "Yes, but we are not disputing that engagements should now be broken."

Mr. Strumpler: (Folding the opinion so that the Articles 1, 2, and 3 only show, and pointing his finger at the dogma), "Dr. Sieck, this is your opinion, the part which represents the dogma."

Dr. Sieck: (Turning paper to the bottom), "But, Mr. Strumpler, look what we say down here."

Mr. Strumpler: "That is only human reason and subterfuge."

Dr. Sieck: (Turning paper to Articles 1, 2, and 3, and pointing his finger), "So is this."

Mr. Strumpler: (To witnesses) "Did you hear that, gentlemen?"

Dr. Sieck: "We made it as clear as we could."

Mr. Strumpler: "You sure did."

Mr. Strumpler: "Then, Dr. Sieck, the breaking of an engagement is now no more binding

than when a delinquent member promises his pastor to come back to church next Sunday and then fails to do so, or a man promises to pay back a \$5.00 and then not doing so."

Dr. Sieck: "But this is more than that because it involves life."

Mr. Strumpler: "Dr. Sieck, what Scriptural proof have you for your position?"

Dr. Sieck: "Mr. Strumpler, what proof have you for your position?"

Mr. Strumpler: "I am an uninformed layman. I would like to know on what Scriptural grounds you are basing your opinion."

Dr. Sieck: "Mr. Strumpler, I did not like the way you wrote to the editor of the *St. Louis Lutheran*, particularly this part here: 'Does Dr. Sieck put any interpretation on Scripture.' Would not Mt. 18 require you to come to me in person instead of sending letters all over?"

Mr. Strumpler: "Matthew 18 is out of the picture once the item appears in public. But if you feel I did wrong, why don't you use church discipline against me?"

Dr. Sieck: "I wouldn't stoop to that."

Mr. Strumpler: "Quote me Bible proof supporting your opinion."

Dr. Sieck: "There is none."

Mr. Strumpler: "No Scriptural proof, and you render such an opinion contrary to God's Word, but strictly on human reasoning?"

Dr. Sieck: "I taught engagement was tantamount to marriage all my life, but I was converted three years ago."

Mr. Strumpler: "Could you not now retract the opinion?"

Dr. Sieck: "No, it is the ruling of the entire faculty? We will publish these findings more elaborately in pamphlet form."

Mr. Strumpler: "Then, Dr. Sieck, when would you say a marriage begins?"

(Page Three)

Dr. Sieck: "When the parties promise to take each other as man and wife at the wedding ceremony."

Dr. Sieck: "When would you say, Mr. Strumpler?"

Mr. Strumpler: "When the groom pleads for the bride's hand with the consent of the parents and pledges his fidelity, and she agrees and the parents give their consent."

Dr. Sieck: "Well, you must remember the Synod, even in Walther's day, changed its policy as in the Wucher case, without formal resolution." [Edit. Note: This is not true. — P. H. B.]

Mr. Strumpler: "Our allotted time is up. I see I must write more, much more."

Dr. Sieck: "That is your prerogative."

Mr. Strumpler: "I must write many letters, a thousand letters."

Dr. Sieck: "Go ahead. Send them out by the carload."

Adjournment with handshakes.

We, the undersigned, bear witness that the statements contained in pages one, two, and three of this conference are true, and thus place our hand and signature hereto.

(Signed) H. A. STRUMPLER, P. L. BRENDL,
O. REIMNITZ, IRVING B. KUNZ.

● A Letter to President Behnken

(EDITORIAL NOTE: The following letter to President Behnken, dated June 18, 1949, speaks for itself. We do not believe that any comment on it is necessary at this time, except to emphasize its importance and to say that no reply has been received to it up to the time of this writing. — P. H. B.)

Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau

Editorial Office

422 Main Avenue, Clinton, Iowa

Rev. J. W. Behnken, D. D., President
Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod
533 S. Kenilworth Avenue
Oak Park, Illinois

Dear Doctor Behnken:

We hereby wish to submit to you the following declarations:

I

Concerning Basic Principles of Church Fellowship

The following are basic principles of Holy Scripture as well as of the Lutheran Church and of the Synodical Conference — Missouri Synod, which we on our part also believe, teach, and confess, rejecting all contrary opinions and practices, concerning the practical matter of discipline in the Church:

When we are confronted by manifest sin in the life of a fellow-Christian requiring admonition, of which only one of us (or at most very few) has any knowledge, we are first of all to admonish the offending brother privately in Christian love and to seek to restore him. If our efforts prove unavailing, they are to be continued before one or two further witnesses. If that, too, remains fruitless, then a third step is to be taken: the whole congregation of which the offending brother

is a member is to deal with him, and, if unsuccessful, to declare to such a one that he has by his impenitence forfeited his claim to membership in the congregation or communion of saints. This final step is the prerogative of the local congregation, as established by Christ, upon which alone such power has been bestowed by the Lord of the Church. It is not to be usurped by other groups, either within or without the local congregation; for instance, by synods and similar organizations, which are as such not of divine authority and dare not be permitted to arrogate to themselves this congregational right, but can only advise in respect to it. *The principles for the procedure under discussion are prescribed in Matt. 18, 15-18, WHICH SCRIPTURE PASSAGE MUST ALWAYS REMAIN THE RULE FOR SUCH A CASE.*

"Then, however, there are sins which may be immediately attacked, rebuked and condemned in the assembly of the congregation, and here one dare not say, 'You must first discuss that privately, you have to observe the first step of brotherly admonition; and then before witnesses, thus observing the second step; and only then dare you come before the congregation.' For that would be applying a rule to a case for which it is not intended; it would be measuring according to a yardstick something which should not be measured according to THIS standard. For, Matthew 18, so far as the first and second steps are concerned, does not deal with sins which are already known to all. There it must be left to one's free discretion whether one does not yet after all want to send a good friend to the erring brother. The rule that it MUST be done thus does not cover these cases. There the word is rather in place: 'Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear' (I Tim. 5, 20) and 'Put away from among yourselves that wicked person' (I Cor. 5, 13). . . He whose wickedness is already manifest and known should be rebuked openly and, if he remains wicked, be put away." (Proceedings, Synodical Conference, 1896, "Church Practice," A. L. Graebner, essayist, p. 15f.) Rightly does Dr. Walther say, adducing I Cor. 5, 13 as an instance: "There can even be cases in which it is not only not in itself necessary to observe the different steps of admonition, but in which it is rather necessary NOT to observe them." (Pastorale, Second Edition, p. 325.) — Who will dispute that the norm or rule for such procedure is laid down in Scripture, in the passages cited as well as elsewhere (Gal. 2, 13f.)? And here the proper distinction between a congregation and a synod must again be observed. Only a congregation can exclude from the congregation or communion of saints, that is, "excommunicate" manifest and impenitent sinners. A synod can

and should, however, *exclude from its own confessional fellowship* such ministers, and teachers (professors, editors, etc.) as, because of adherence to a confession contrary to its own corporate confession, can no longer rightly claim identification with the latter. (Cp. Dr. Walther, "Concerning Some of the Main Obligations Which a Synod Has If It Wishes to Bear the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod Rightly," Essay, First Convention of the Iowa District, 1879, *Proceedings*, p. 64.) Only so can both the principle of confessional fellowship and *the right of private judgment* be properly preserved and the necessary defense against the abuse of either of these be maintained. This matter can be summed up in a brief axiom such as, for instance: If your right of private judgment has made you confessionally a non-Lutheran or a non-Missourian, then don't pretend to be and falsely demand to be recognized as being of the Lutheran or Missourian fellowship. "What immorality is more patent than the pretence that the right of private judgment is something which authorizes a man to make his whole life a falsehood? . . . You have the civil right and the moral right to form your impressions in regard to truth, but there the right stops. You have not the right to remain in any Christian communion, except as its terms of membership give you that right. So easy is this definition, and so clearly a part, not of speculation, but of practical morals, that the law of the land recognizes it. . . . Those who imagine that the right of private judgment is the right of men, within the Lutheran Church, and bearing her hallowed name, to teach what they please in the face of her testimony, know not the nature of the right they claim, nor of the Church, whose very life involves her refusal to have fellowship with them in their error." (Krauth, "The Confessional Principle," in *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology*, pp. 169-175.) This at the same time disposes of the question of "*academic freedom*" in the Church.

As concerns *false teaching* more particularly, this is a sin which is public in its very nature; and, because it concerns all and is so destructive to the Church (like a leaven, a cancer: Mt. 16, 6. 12 and Gal. 5, 9; II Tim. 2, 17), Scripture admonishes us constantly to bear witness against it and to reprove its purveyors and adherents, II Tim. 4, 1-5; Tit. 1, 9-11. With express reference to the latter passage Dr. F. Pieper has rightly said: "The demand which is sometimes voiced, that a public teacher refrain from polemics, is accordingly contrary to Scripture. . . . In vain does a preacher endeavor to wash his hands in innocence because he has preached the truth if he has not at the same time warned against

error and according to circumstances has done this in such a way as to name the names of erroristic spirits." (*Christliche Dogmatik*, I, p. 54f.) That this is also the position of the Lutheran Church is shown by its confession as contained in the Book of Concord, which declares: "That troublesome and contentious men, who do not suffer themselves to be bound to any formula of the pure doctrine, may not have liberty, according to their good pleasure, to excite controversies which furnish ground for offense, and to publish and contend for extravagant opinions" (Preface, Trigl. Edit., pp. 21, 23). And again: "For the preservation of pure doctrine and for thorough, permanent, godly unity in the Church it is necessary, not only that the pure, wholesome doctrine be rightly presented, but also that the opponents who teach otherwise be reproved, I Tim. 3 (II Tim. 3, 16; Tit. 1, 9)." And still again: "That all unlawful, doubtful, suspicious, and condemned doctrines, wherever and in whatever books they may be found, and whoever may have written them, might be exposed (distinctly repudiated), so that every one may be faithfully warned against the errors which are spread here and there in the writings of some theologians ['theologians of the Augsburg Confession' are expressly meant, *Trigl. Conc.*, p. 1095], and no one be misled in this matter by the reputation (authority) of any man." (Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, "Of Articles in Controversy, with Respect to the Antithesis, or Opposite Doctrine," *Trigl. Conc.*, pp. 855; 857.) As for those who persist in causing divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, Holy Scripture exhorts us to mark and avoid them, Rom. 16, 17. We understand and use the word "division" in its Scriptural sense (John 7, 43; 9, 16; 10, 19; I Cor. 1, 10; 11, 18; 3, 3; Rom. 16, 17) and accordingly regard as "*divisive*" whatever, inasmuch as it is contrary to God's Word, the foundation of faith, tends and serves to estrange and sever Christians from the unity of faith, doctrine, and confession which God has enjoined, Matt. 28, 20; Jude 3. (Cp. the regularly repeated "We believe, teach, and confess . . . therefore we reject and condemn," etc., of the Formula of Concord.) That adherents of error compel *separation* is expressly taught not only in Rom. 16, 17, but also, for instance, in Acts 19, 9 and in II Cor. 6, 17. — What is here set forth is the right and duty not only of congregations as such, but of every individual Christian as well as of groups of Christians such as those who are united in a synod. All of this is a vital part of the CONFESSIONAL PRINCIPLE of Holy Scripture (I Cor. 1, 10), which dare never be set aside.

What is true over against false teaching is equally true as concerns *false practice*, which, rightly considered, presupposes a false doctrinal position. On this matter the following thesis was adopted by the Synodical Conference in 1896: "In as far as manifest denial of the truth lies in disregard of the divine norm in church practice, persistent adherence to practice which is contrary to Scripture is as divisive as is adherence to false teaching." ("Church Practice," Dr. A. L. Graebner, essayist, Proceedings, 1896, p. 27.) To this thesis the essayist, Dr. A. L. Graebner, made the following remarks: "Whoever persistently indulges in false practice renounces truth just as does he who advocates practice which is contrary to Scripture and thus teaches false doctrine, even though he, while doing this, wants to be recognized as a Christian; and as an orthodox Christian, too. For what else does he say thereby than: What I am doing is right. And when he is told: But God's Word says *thus* — then he will, in order not to be in contradiction with himself, either have to say: You understand that falsely; that is not what God's Word teaches at all; it is not the rule in accordance with which we must act; what you propose is not true at all. In such a case he denies something which God has said, says No to that to which God has said Yes, or says Yes to that to which God has said No. That is false teaching. Or else he will have to say: Now, that may be written in Scripture; but that does not bind me, I am not guided by it, I cannot be guided by it, I will not be guided by it. In such a case he is manifestly disobedient to the Words of Scripture and again denies that this Word of Scripture must bind his conscience also in his practice. So he has in his practice in every such a case as soon as he is reminded of this and adheres to his practice denied the authority of the Word of God, the rule, and such a one can impossibly stand on the same doctrinal ground with us, even though he should assert this ten times and though he permitted it to be printed and disseminated in ten thousand copies of his constitution." (P. 29f.)

Concerning the whole matter of a *proper attitude over against error* Luther has said: "You put yourself under suspicion by remaining silent and covering up things. If, however, you believe as you declare to believe before me, then declare this also in the Church, in lectures, in sermons, and in private colloquies, and strengthen your brethren, and help the erring get back on the right track, and speak out against wilful spirits; otherwise your confession is merely a masquerade and worthless. Whoever regards his teaching, faith, and confession as true, right, and certain, — such a one cannot stand in one and the same stall with

others who teach false doctrine or adhere to it, nor always have a good word for the devil and his minions. A teacher who remains silent over against error and yet wants to be regarded as a true teacher is worse than an open fanatic and does greater harm by his hypocrisy than a heretic, and he is not to be trusted. He is a wolf and a fox, a hireling and a belly-server, and the like, and he may despise and give up doctrine, the Word, faith, the Sacrament, churches, and schools. He is either secretly a bed-fellow of the foe, or he is a doubter and a windbag and wants to see where things will end, whether Christ or the devil is to obtain the victory; or he is altogether uncertain of himself and not worthy of being called a scholar, let alone a teacher." (St. Louis Edit., XVII, 1180.) — Here we incidentally have Luther's own definition, at least in part, of a "belly-server," a term which he as well as the Authorized Version used in rendering Rom. 16, 17, viz.: "a teacher who remains silent over against error and yet wants to be regarded as a true teacher." Luther's classic characterization and evaluation of such a one should meet with the approval of everyone who rightly bears the Lutheran name.

The principles and practices outlined should be recognized as belonging to the very *marks of a true Christian*: "Faith makes men Christians; but confession alone marks them as Christians" (Krauth, "The Confessional Principle," in *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology*, p. 166), Rom. 10, 10; John 8, 31; Matt. 10, 32. I Cor. 11, 19 teaches us that God suffers error to arise among Christians for the very purpose that they may prove themselves over against it.

When we, either as individual Christians, or as a congregation, or as a synod, etc., necessarily refuse to join in confessional fellowship or to remain joined in such fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine, this is not to be construed as though we in every case deny that those over against whom we must assume such a Scriptural attitude of separation may still be Christians at all. That is shown by II Thess. 3, 14. For there we are (evidently with special reference to a certain case of disorderly conduct based on false teaching, v. 6) told to "have no company with" any such a one as is disobedient to the Apostolic Word, and yet to admonish him as a brother rather than to count him as AN ENEMY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. Contrariwise there is shown here the fallacy of the conclusion that if we acknowledge that anyone may still be called a "Christian" we must also consent to external (confessional) fellowship relations with him. The Greek word used in II Thess. 3, 14, and thus the treatment prescribed in such a case, are precisely

the same as in I Cor. 5, 9, 11, where St. Paul forbids (confessional) fellowship with so-called "Christians" who are living in such sins as fornication, covetousness, idolatry — think of present-day lodge "Christians"! —, raillery, drunkenness, and extortion. It means, literally: "not to be mixed up together" with.

I Cor. 5, 9, 13 very carefully defines *church fellowship as distinguished from mere civic relations*. It is here that all such as raise an improper objection in this matter (the "44") have their Scriptural answer. As for the further question of proper contacts with the *unconverted for missionary purposes*, this is decided by such passages as Mt. 28, 19: such as are not yet "disciples" are rightly the object of our missionary endeavors. The *limitations of our missionary obligation* are at the same time set forth in the passage already referred to as well as in Rom. 15, 20f. and in I Pet. 4, 15: "not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation"; "a busybody in other men's matters." Mere enthusiasm for "union" should not be confused with true missionary effort. The vast majority of present-day "union" efforts actually frustrate real missionary activity, dissipate much of the Church's best strength, and squander huge sums of money which its members have contributed for the real work of the Church.

Thus we claim it as *our evangelical right and obligation* to confess the entire truth of God's Holy Word, and to reject any and all contrary error, in teaching and in practice, as publicly as these are public. Our principles and practices are prescribed by God's Word. They are Lutheran teaching. They are identical with the position of the Synodical Conference — Missouri Synod.

II

The Essence of a Synod

It should be the *purpose of synods* by proper advice to help to secure unto congregations and pastors their evangelical right and through joint action on the basis of a common confession and practice to be of assistance to them toward realizing their God-given objectives to their fullest possible extent. (Cp. the essay by Dr. Walther "Concerning Some of the Main Obligations Which a Synod Has If It Wishes to Bear the Name of an Evangelical Lutheran Synod Rightly," Proceedings, First Convention of the Iowa District, 1879, pp. 9-118.)

So far as the *Missouri Synod* is concerned, it has in its Constitution expressly —

Declared its *Objects* to be:

"The protection of pastors, teachers, and

congregations in the performance of their duties and the maintenance of their rights."

"The conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4, 3-6; I Cor. 1, 10) and a united defense against schism and sectarianism (Rom. 16, 17)."

(Article III, 8, 1; 1949 edition.)

Provided the following *Conditions of Membership*:

"Acceptance of the confessional basis of Article II," namely, — acceptance "without reservation" of "1) The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice; 2) All Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as a true and unaltered statement and exposition of the Word of God."

"Renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description."

(Art. VI, 1. 2.)

Made its Officers responsible to Synod in everything pertaining to their rights and the performance of their duties, and permitted them to "assume only such rights as have been expressly conferred upon them by Synod."

(Art. XI, 1.)

Charged its President in particular with the supervision regarding the doctrine and the administration of all officers, employees, District Presidents and Districts of Synod and made it "the President's duty to see to it that all the aforementioned act in accordance with Synod's Constitution, to admonish all who in any way depart from it, and, if such admonition is not heeded, to report such cases to Synod." To that end the Constitution has further provided that "*the President has, AND ALWAYS SHALL HAVE, the power to advise, admonish and reprove,*" and that "*he shall conscientiously USE all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all Districts of Synod.*" To which we may add that the President has also been specifically charged with the duty "to see that the resolutions of Synod are carried out."

(Art. XIB, 1. 2. 3. 4. Our emphases.)

In accordance with the important Lutheran principles enunciated in the Preface to the Book of Concord (Trigl. Edit., p. 25), the Missouri Synod has further arranged for the proper ad-

ministration of its affairs under the supervision of its President in the *By-Laws of Its Constitution*, which contain various specific regulations for that purpose, — for instance: No's. 2. 27; 3. 23; 3. 41; 3. 61ff., especially 3. 7. (Handbook, 1949 Edition, pp. 43. 56. 57ff.)

Concerning the preservation of the proper character of our synod, as of any synod, Dr. Walther, its first President and greatest God-given teacher, has well said: "If we desire that our crown-jewels be preserved unto us, then each one in his station and calling has to lend a hand to this task, and . . . our synodical watchmen, our Presidents, have to continue to be not so much watchmen of human ordinances, but much rather watchmen over purity of doctrine and Christian knowledge." (Sermon on "Pure Doctrine and Christian Knowledge a Free Gift of Divine Grace," I Cor. 1, 4. 5; cited by Dr. F. Pieper, Proceedings, Synodical Conference, 1888, p. 33f.) And again: "It is not enough that a Lutheran synod so to say simply constitute itself a Lutheran firm (*nur die lutherische Firma habe*); that there be written above its door: 'A confessionally faithful Synod, which confesses itself without reservation to all symbols.' Yes, it is not enough that it accept only such pastors and teachers as prove themselves confessionally true. *It also has to see to it that they remain so.* Mt. 10, 22. But it is impossible that a larger church fellowship remain in the true faith if it be not investigated again and again whether everything is still as it was in the beginning when the preacher came into the congregation. Without visitation it is hardly well possible that a church remain in fellowship of faith and confession. That is why it is a terrible way of talking that the so-called 'confessionally faithful' in Germany have: 'If only the pure doctrine is *publica doctrina*, that is the rightful one, the one that has legitimate standing, which everyone ought to teach according to the law; so that every false teaching is really illegitimate!' So if the pure doctrine is only *the legitimate one*, even though the church be otherwise ever so corrupt, then it is a truly Lutheran Church. If the obligation to the confession has not yet been abolished, but still has legal standing, is legitimate, even though there be not a single preacher who preaches it, then the church is still always a good one. That is no different than if an association constitutes itself for a good purpose and its members finally agree to carry out some villainous business, — but they retain their constitution as a benevolent society. In such a case they could not say: It is indeed a mean trick that we are playing, but since we really ought to do good according to our constitution we are nevertheless an honorable, upright society;

for so it is stated in our constitution, which we still have! Thus those who are called 'confessionally faithful' in Germany say: 'Why, it is to be read in our constitution: the Lutheran doctrine is public doctrine!' But it is not enough that it reads that way on paper; neither is it enough if all preachers and teachers are obligated to it when they enter office; but *this confession should also be practiced.*" (Proceedings, Iowa District, 1879, p. 32f.) — It is of the essence of sectarianism to promote a mere synodical organization for its own sake. Citing Luther, Dr. Walther has again said concerning this matter, and the Missouri Synod has confessed itself to these principles: "As soon as we are more concerned about our synod than we are about the invisible *kingdom of God*, the kingdom of grace and salvation, we begin to be a *sect*. For it is really of the essence of sectarianism that one has his eye on his own little communion above all even though the kingdom of God may suffer harm thereby. . . . Only then have we gained something if our congregations and pastors remain with us because they see that we have the pure, sweet, blessed and saving Gospel in its purity and truth. *That* pastor is no true pastor who merely wants to make the members of his congregation fanatics for the Lutheran Church, or for the Missouri Synod, or, still worse, just for the Iowa District. Such pastors are bad ones. They are rather to direct people to Christ and to say: Look here; we proclaim the pure Word of God in which the eternal Gospel of Christ is contained, for *that* reason you should adhere to us! For by no means does salvation depend on us, neither on the Missouri Synod. If the Synod therefore no longer proclaims the pure Word of God, then it is worthy of nothing more than to be forsaken. . . . The Missouri Synod must remember this. It must rather be willing to perish than that harm should come to the Church through its continued existence. Those who want to see the Synod continue to exist under all circumstances, whether the kingdom of God suffers as a consequence or not, are not motivated by the Spirit of Christ, but by the spirit of self-seeking [cp. Rom. 16, 17f.] and instead of being a stone in the building of the kingdom of Christ they are a hindrance to it." (First Convention of Iowa District, 1879, pp. 112; 114; 115.) A more recent fine testimony in this matter was published in 1919 over the signature of Dr. Theo. Graebner in the *Lutheran Witness* (p. 182f.), as follows: "Let synodical officials perform their duty; but above all, let us all be awake to our responsibilities. Better a thousand times a Missouri Synod of only 10,000 souls, but faithful, than a body of a million, honey-combed with the lodge spirit and infected

with unionism — that lethal leprosy of the Church. Let us stand firm — no matter what losses in membership and outward influence our stand may entail; the Lord must look out for that, it is none of our business. A Missouri Synod growing lax in practice, refusing to see the stealthy influences at work, afraid to testify, afraid to bring offenders to book, afraid to lose a congregation here or there, which dispenses itself from disobedience to the Word of God — a Missouri Synod growing effete, smug, and spineless, boasting of numbers while it permits dry rot to destroy its inner life, would not only be the kind of church which Christ shall spew from His mouth, but would bring down others into ruin and prove a traitor to all Lutherans."

III

The Situation Confronting Us

During the last ten years, in the course of which a mass of correspondence on our part both with offenders and with the President has proved futile, serious charges of false teaching and practice within the Missouri Synod, especially also in its official organ, the *Lutheran Witness*, have repeatedly been brought to the attention of the President. Some of these charges are directly related to the public controversy originated by the "44." All of them are sorely dividing our synod. Yet the President continues to insist even at this late date that no more be done than that "the accuser and the accused should get together for an oral discussion," and he seeks to deny the right of public reproof of existing widespread public false teaching and practice. In practical effect the principle advocated by the President amounts to a demand for toleration of error and sole and exclusive right of publicity for it.

The President is acting contrary to the above stated principles of the Lutheran Church and of the Synodical Conference — Missouri Synod; as a result doctrinal discipline is in the process of breaking down completely in our midst; Synod is in imminent danger of having forfeited its orthodox character (Brief Statement, Sect. 29). We beg the President in all evangelical brotherliness to revise his position and his practice without delay. We assure him in all Christian love that we shall be ready, so far as this may be desired, to be helpful to this end with any and all means at our disposal. We likewise give him the solemn assurance that we shall be anxious to do all we can to help ease the burden which may arise to him for doing what is right. For we know that there is a relatively small but vocal minority of liberal-minded men within our synod whose teach-

ing and practice would destroy what was built up under God by our synodical fathers through much labor, faithful testimony, and enduring hardship — the inescapable hardship of the Cross — during Missouri's first century.

IV

A Substantiating Letter

In substantiation of our charges we append herewith a Letter addressed by the President under date of March 18, 1949, to Pastor Paul H. Burgdorf of Clinton, Iowa, as follows:

"In the January, 1949, issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*, which was mailed to me, on page five, column two, you have printed under the caption 'WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO CONFESS?' a statement from 'The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion' and a statement from an essay of Dr. Fr. Pieper on the unity of faith.

"Why did you disregard the context in both quotations?

"Why did you place these two statements over against each other as though they were either-or?

"Why did you resort to italics without mentioning who did the italicising?

"In the August, 1948, number, which was mailed to me, page 101, column two, you printed the caption 'HAS THE VIRUS NOW INFECTED THE PRESIDIUM?'

"Why this insinuation?

"Why was this printed without taking the matter up with the Presidium?

"The charge is a serious one and necessitates proof.

"In the latest issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* (March, 1949), of which a copy was mailed to me, you have printed quotations from the *Lutheran Witness* of former years. You then print a number of editorial notes. In doing so you prefer charges against the editors of the *Lutheran Witness* and against the entire faculty in St. Louis.

"These attacks should not appear in print. If your charges are true they should be taken up with the editors and with the faculty. This should be done in an orderly way.

"On former occasions I have called attention to what should be done. I have suggested that the accuser and the accused should get together for an oral discussion. That is what should be

done now. I want to urge this procedure most emphatically."

The above letter bears the notation that copies of it were sent by the President to the *Lutheran Witness*, the St. Louis Faculty, and the Vice-Presidents of Synod.

V

Comments on the President's Letter
of March 18, 1949

Lest the President fail to realize the full injustice of statements contained in his Letter of March 18, 1949, we shall still add a few pertinent comments on the same.

The President's Letter, for one thing, refers to an article in the March, 1949, *Confessional Lutheran* in which there are aired certain CHARGES AGAINST THE *Lutheran Witness* AND AGAINST THE ENTIRE FACULTY AT ST. LOUIS, which, as censorial committee, is in an especial degree responsible for the doctrinal contents of that publication. These charges refer to Romans 16, 17, and related teachings of Holy Scripture. The matter at issue has since 1945 been thrown into public controversy by editors of the *Lutheran Witness* who are also of the number of the "44," and it has by express agreement with the Presidium been permitted to remain at issue, in doctrine and in practice, until the present day. The editors of the *Lutheran Witness* are not only guilty of false teaching, which is a serious thing in itself, but they have, besides, become guilty of misusing this official organ of the Missouri Synod to propagandize their views as well as a false Opinion of the St. Louis Faculty which condones the error of the *Lutheran Witness* and of the "44" concerning Rom. 16, 17. It is indeed most disorderly that this official organ of our Synod is being so misused, and it is equally disorderly that it is being permitted to be so misused, without proper public correction to this day, to gain adherents for error directly contrary to the Scriptural position of the Missouri Synod. We shall have to continue to insist that it is our evangelical right and duty, and wholly in order that we bear testimony against the offenses which are the disorder of the day within our synodical fellowship as publicly as these are public. The Missouri Synod has plainly put its position in a matter like this on record, e. g., in an article in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1878, pp. 289-295, by Dr. Wm. Sihler, which wonderfully fits the present situation in every important detail. The *Lutheran Witness* itself has in better, bygone days clearly enunciated the principles that should prevail in such circumstances, especially in an article that made it

a point to set forth the "Limitations of Editors of Missouri Synod Organs," 1924, pp. 18ff. A fuller compilation of the past testimony of the *Lutheran Witness* in this matter will be found in an article titled "The *Lutheran Witness* Once and Now" in the May, 1949, issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*.

The editor of the *Confessional Lutheran* has since 1940, as have others among the undersigned, amassed an imposing file of copies of letters sent to editors of the *Lutheran Witness*, members of the St. Louis faculty, and others involved. Some of these were never answered. In other cases correspondence was unduly broken off by recipients. Occasionally replies, especially by Dr. Theo. Graebner, contain reflections of a personal nature, wholly unbecoming their author or any writer. But *never has the assurance been given, or any hope been held out, that offenses would be removed.* Instead, error has continued to be heaped upon error and stubbornly defended until it is a tragic spectacle that confronts us today. As early as in 1940 Pastor Burgdorf met repeatedly with Dr. Graebner, and others among the undersigned have met with him and other editors of the *Lutheran Witness* from time to time. Always the outcome has been one and the same: strengthened evidence that the *Lutheran Witness* is determined to continue to rush on headlong on the course of error on which it has embarked. The President has been advised of such facts over and over again. With him, too, an extensive correspondence has been carried on during these years, and special meetings have been held with him from time to time, not to mention testimony given in his presence at regular conferences and conventions. Formal charges have been placed into his hands time and again only to fail to receive the serious attention which they deserve and which they demand in the very nature of the case. It may be stated that even if charges had been advanced which could not be upheld, it would still remain the President's solemn duty to see that they be examined and that the critical matters at issue be resolved in a Christian way. This is an obligation of his office which he cannot escape. But a superabundance of evidence of the correctness of such charges has been offered him. Yet the President refuses even now to take effective action and persists in leaving wholly in question the correctness of any and all proof offered him.

The President's Letter further asks several questions concerning an article in the January, 1949, issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* titled WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO CONFESS? In this

article a statement from the President's Theses on "The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion" (a document related to the State-mentarian Controversy) is opposed to a statement from the confession of the Synodical Conference in connection with a convention essay by Dr. Pieper.

One of these questions is: "Why did you place these two statements over against each other as though they were either-or?" To that question we must answer: Because precisely that is the nature of these two statements. They are irreconcilable. One necessarily excludes the other. The statement in the President's Theses cannot be permitted to stand.

Another one of these questions is: "Why did you disregard the context in both cases?" This is a plain begging of the question: *was* the context disregarded in either case? The proper answer to that question is a decided No. The italicized portion from the President's Theses would be even more certainly seen to be unacceptable if the further context were quoted. The italicized portion from the confession of the Synodical Conference in the words of Dr. Fr. Pieper, on the other hand, would be just as certainly seen to be acceptable if more were quoted from the context. One is simply right; the other, wrong. The context has been sufficiently quoted in both instances so that everyone can fairly judge for himself. In addition, the necessary references are given to both sources so that anyone may consult them further, — which we very much desire.

The third question which the President's Letter asks in this matter is: "Why did you resort to italics without mentioning who did the italicising?" There are really two questions involved here: (1) Italics were resorted to in order to emphasize the critical contrast between the two statements; 2) It was not mentioned who did the italicising because of a mere oversight. (Nor was it mentioned who should be credited with the translating of the statement from Dr. Pieper.) We know of no rule of procedure, however, either in literary practice or in Scripture, least of all evangelical grounds, on the basis of which this can be demanded. That is particularly true again since we have indicated the respective sources, so that everyone can examine these for himself. What happened by mere oversight this once in the *Confessional Lutheran* is common practice, *e. g.*, in official publications of the Missouri Synod

notably in those by our greatest scholar, Dr. Walther; and we note that an instance of it occurs in the President's recent *Theses on Fellowship*, p. 6, line 10. However, if the President should desire this, we shall be more than ready publicly to issue the information, whenever and wherever the President might want this to be done, that the emphases in question (as well as the translation of the quotation from Dr. Fr. Pieper's Synodical Conference essay) should be credited to the editor of the *Confessional Lutheran*.

Finally, the President's Letter refers to a subheading titled HAS THE VIRUS NOW INFECTED THE PRESIDUM? in an article on "The Virus of Neo-Lutheranism within the Missouri Synod" in the August, 1948, issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*. The testimony in question again concerns a criticism of the President's Theses on "The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion" in the public controversy incited by Statementarians within the Missouri Synod. More specifically, it concerns certain statements in that document contained in the section headed "III. The Problem of the 'Visible' and the 'Invisible' Church," pp. 8-11.

The President's Theses on "The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion" appeared early in 1948, the letter of the President which accompanied them being dated January 27, 1948. Very soon after their appearance Pastor Burgdorf took up with the President the discussion of these Theses, and more particularly of the section in question. In a letter dated March 17, 1948, Pastor Burgdorf wrote the President, among other things, as follows: "Holy Scripture has clearly revealed the doctrine of the Church (*ekklesia*), both in the proper sense of the word (the One, true invisible Church), and in a larger sense of the word (a visible church or churches). In 'The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion' I note the heading 'III. The Problem of the "Visible" and the "Invisible" Church,' p. 8. I hardly believe that it is the intended sense of this heading to reduce the *doctrine* of the Church to a mere problem. This leaves me at a loss to know just what is supposed to be the 'problem' referred to here, for this is nowhere revealed in the text of the document in question. Will you please supply the necessary information?" A reply received, under date of April 3, 1948, made necessary the following further letter to the President by Pastor Burgdorf under date of April 12, 1948: "In your letter of April 3 you state that in 'The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion' under your auspices the heading 'III. The Problem of the "Visible" and

the "Invisible" Church,' p. 8, means 'die ganze Frage, die hineinschlägt.' Will you please inform me what 'die ganze Frage, die hineinschlägt' is which, accordingly, is supposed to constitute the *problem* of the Church." No reply was ever received to this letter with its vital question, and thus this important correspondence was unduly broken off by the President. — On April 7, moreover, at the pastoral conference of the Northern Illinois District, Dr. Theo. Dierks, who is a member of the *Confessional Lutheran* editorial staff and who later wrote the article on "The Virus of Neo-Lutheranism in the Missouri Synod," criticising the Theses of the President on "The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion," in the presence of the President delivered a paper on the "Doctrine of the Church," a mimeographed copy of which had been supplied to every member of the conference present and which was then adopted by the conference. In this paper Dr. Dierks necessarily rejected the same teachings which were later rejected in the *Confessional Lutheran* article under discussion, largely in identical words. One of the brethren called attention to the fact that the essayist was rejecting what is taught in the President's Theses on the Church, p. 10, and requested the latter to clarify the situation. The President was asked by the chairman whether he wished to make any comment; however, he remained silent. — Another conference, the Chicago Heights, Ill., conference, of which Pastor A. T. Kretzmann, another member of the *Confessional Lutheran* staff is a member, took up this matter with the President. The net result of the correspondence of this conference with the President was to have a rejection of what is confessed by the Missouri Synod as its doctrinal position in its Brief Statement and in its Catechism come out of the President's office. The Brief Statement declares: "Since it is by faith in the Gospel alone that men become members of the Christian Church, and since this faith cannot be seen by men, but is known by God alone, I Kgs. 8, 39; Acts 1, 24; II Tim. 2, 19, therefore the Christian Church on earth, is *invisible*, Lk. 17, 20, and will remain invisible till Judgment Day, Col. 3, 3." (Par. 25.) In direct contradiction of what is here confessed, the President, in reply to the Chicago Heights Pastoral Conference, had the following sent through his office by the author of the Theses on the Church: "To prove the Church to be invisible on the basis of Lk. 17, 20 is in my opinion an unwarranted use of the text. . . . The passage Col. 3, 3 . . . is not applicable." Our Catechism states the Scriptural reason for the invisibility of the Church in these words (Q. 176): "The Church is invisible since no man can look into another's

heart and see whether he believes." According to the author of the President's Theses on the Church, however, the Church is invisible to the believer only in so far as such a one cannot know the exact number of believers. We quote: "It is granted without a moment's hesitation that the Church is 'invisible' for the reason that no unbeliever knows the true nature of the Church nor does any Christian know the exact number of believers." Such teaching is as un-Missourian as it is un-Lutheran and un-Scriptural. It is the false Iowan leaven taught within the American Lutheran Church, notably also in Dr. Reu's *Dogmatics*. — Now, to return to the point at issue, why, in view of all such testimony to the contrary, does the President ask concerning criticism of the matter at issue: "Why was this printed without taking up the matter with the Presidium?" Is not the President's question wholly out of order?

The President's Letter asks with respect to the title-question already referred to ("Has the Virus Now Infected the Presidium?"): "Why this insinuation?" To this we reply: This is not a mere insinuation (according to the genuinely accepted definition of that term in dictionaries in common use), but a forthright, wholly proper and urgent question; and this question is answered in a straightforward manner in the article on the President's Theses: "This is the neo-Lutheran doctrine." That is a direct, honest charge. The President himself also rightly calls it that when he goes on to say: "The charge is a serious one and necessitates proof." We are happy that the President realizes the seriousness of the situation confronting us. He should be expected to act accordingly. As for the necessary proof of the charge in question, it is right in the article referred to. The virus in question has been put under the light of God's Word so that all who will may recognize it for what it is, its presence in the President's Theses has been shown, and the proper antidote has been prescribed. The President's Theses need to be corrected in this respect as in others. As they read, they cannot serve to allay the issues raised by the Statementarian Controversy; they will rather prolong and aggravate that controversy. Unless corrected, they can but do the greatest harm to our church in a matter that concerns the soul's salvation of each one of its members as well as of others. Evangelical procedure demands that the necessary correction be made without delay.

In witness of the sincerity of our convictions and action we have ordered our names to be subscribed to this document by the undersigned.

PAUL H. BURGDORF in behalf of himself and the following —

REV. J. BUENGER
REV. THEO. DIERKS, S. T. D.
REV. A. V. KUSTER, B. D.
REV. A. T. KRETZMANN
REV. W. H. McLAUGHLIN, M. S. T.
REV. ELDOR MUELLER
REV. E. WIEDBUSCH
REV. E. T. LAMS, D. D.
REV. ARTHUR C. DAHMS

June 18, 1949.

❁ Corrections

"The essayist" referred to in the report of the Intersynodical Committee of the Southern California District quoted in our editorial "Most of the Confessions of the Lutheran Church would be shelved for mere historic reference," in the December, 1949, *Confessional Lutheran* (p. 139) is the essayist of that committee, not (as reported by us) Dr. Wm. Arndt, who was essayist at the convention. The error in identification is wholly the fault of the editor of the *Confessional Lutheran*, who herewith hastens to make this correction and expresses deep regret for any injustice done as a result of it. For this correction we are indebted to the same member of the Southern California District (a layman) who sent us the pertinent paragraph of the report of the Intersynodical Committee of the Southern California District.

* * * *

In the December issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*, in the report of the meeting of the Chicago Study Club on September 28 and 29, first paragraph, third-last line, the following words (a whole line, inadvertently omitted in print) is to be inserted after the words "love of the brethren": and a fervent desire by the power of God's Spirit to recall the erring.

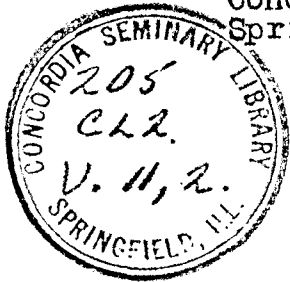
On page 144, third paragraph, line 6, "names of grace" should, of course, read: means of grace.

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD

1342
Prof. R. Neitzel, D.D.
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois



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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Cone., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

FEBRUARY, 1950

NUMBER 2

IN THIS ISSUE: A Prayer — Do They Still Believe and Teach the Catechism in St. Louis? — Chicago Study Club — Further Success in Germany — Significant Information from Germany — Evils Resulting From the Denial of Simple Catechism Truth Concerning the Church: Papism and Bureaucratism — Some Interesting Figures — A Word to Laymen — On the Union Front.

❶ A Prayer

O faithful God, who hast given the world Thine eternal truth in the holy revelation of Thy Word, what shame for men not to receive what Thou in great mercy hast vouchsafed to them. They ignore the Savior's words, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Not satisfied with neglecting Thy Word, they make war against it, seeking to banish it from their minds; and failing in this, seeking to pervert its sense and to rob it of its authority. Help us to realize what priceless treasure Thou didst deliver into our keeping when Thou didst have holy men who were moved by Thy Holy Spirit

to write the inspired Scriptures. Thou dost ask us to contend, and to contend earnestly for the faith which hath once for all time been delivered unto the saints. Make us bold in our fight for this faith. Keep us untouched by the false teachings of this present day. Deepen our convictions in the truths of Thy holy Word, especially the gracious truths of the virgin birth, the life, the suffering, the death, the resurrection of our Lord. Let us continue to see in Him the eternal Son of the everlasting God. Help us to battle against our own inward lethargy and carelessness. Glorify the faith in our eyes, and influence us so that we may always consider the highest purpose of

THE CONFSSIONAL LUTHERAN

Published in the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism
By the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau
(One Dollar Per Year)

Editor.....Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf
Assistant Editor.....Rev. J. Buenger
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Articles intended for publication are to be addressed to
the office of publication: Box 73, Clinton, Iowa.

Subscriptions (\$1.00 per year) are to be sent to
Rev. Eldor Mueller, 910 Second Avenue, Sterling, Illinois.
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Lutheran."

TRACT DEPARTMENT: Box 4, Elizabeth, Illinois.

our lives to be the upholding of the truth in Jesus.
Hear us, for His Name's sake. Amen.

Adapted from W. E. Schuette's
Moments with God by Edgar Lams.

Do They Still Believe and Teach the Catechism in St. Louis?

1. The Church

"A Spiritual Body"

The Catechism reads: "Why do you say,
I believe in 'the' Church. I say, I believe in *the*
Church because there is only one Church; for all

believers are a communion of saints, or one
spiritual body, whose one and only Head is
Christ." (Question 177.)

If the Church is a spiritual body, then it cannot be visible.

The *Lutheran Witness* staff, however, today contends for the false statement that the Christian Church is "the visible body of Christ on earth." (*Lutheran Witness*, 1944, p. 51.)

"I Believe in the Church"

The Catechism reads: "Why do you say, 'I believe' in the Church? I say, I *believe* in the Church — Because the Church is invisible, since no man can look into another's heart and see whether he believes." (Question 176.) As proof-text the Catechism cites Luke 17:20, 21.

I do not actually *know* of a single person (outside of myself) who is a believer. I can only *assume* that such and such a person may be a believer.

The author of "The Doctrine of the Church" sent the following statement through the office of the President: "To prove the Church to be invisible on the basis of Luke 17:20 is in my opinion an *unwarranted use* of the text. . . . It is granted without a moment's hesitation that the Church is 'invisible' for the reason that *no unbeliever knows the true nature of the Church* nor does any Christian know the *exact number* of believers." (Our emphasis.)

"Avoid All False Churches"

The Catechism reads: "When do we use the doctrine of the Church properly? We use the doctrine of the Church properly . . . When we *avoid all false churches*." (Question 186.) As proof-text the Catechism cites Rom. 16:17.

In an Opinion, dated May-June, 1946, and reiterated in May, 1948, the St. Louis Faculty has said, "Some would hold that v. 18 shows definitely that Paul is pointing to people who are not Christians; others deny this. . . . Many hold that St. Paul here inculcates that all false teachers must be avoided." [The Springfield Faculty, in rejecting this Opinion (the Opinion was originally part of the "Guidelines"), held "that the text requires avoidance of *all* teachers of false doctrine."] In regard to such difference the St. Louis Faculty said, "Brethren must be willing to bear with one another."

In other words, according to the St. Louis Faculty a person may believe or deny that Rom. 16:17 is correctly cited by the Catechism to prove that we should "avoid all false churches." There we must bear with one another.

2. A Lifelong Union

The Catechism reads: "What is marriage? Marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman unto one flesh. Marriage was instituted by God and is entered into by rightful betrothal, or engagement." (Question 61.) The German Schwan Catechism has, "Die von Gott gestiftete, durch rechtmässiges Verlöbniß geschlossene lebenslängliche Verbindung zwischen Mann und Weib zu einem Fleisch." The lifelong union is "geschlossen," that is, brought about, or established through a rightful betrothal.

The St. Louis Faculty in an Opinion, dated May 24, 1949, declares, "While Holy Writ clearly states that holy matrimony was instituted by God (Gen. 2, 18-24; Matt. 19, 4-6a), there is no indication that He ordained betrothal or engagement. The latter therefore is of human origin. While Holy Writ likewise states with all clarity that holy matrimony is a lifelong institution (Rom. 7, 2-3), divorce being permissible only upon the grounds of fornication and of malicious desertion (Matt. 19, 6b, 9; I Cor. 7, 10-15), there is no such pronouncement with respect to betrothal or engagement. Since the Church must not bind upon the consciences of her people that which the Lord does not Himself expressly demand, it is our opinion that betrothal or engagement must not be regarded as tantamount to marriage."

The St. Louis Faculty denies the Catechism teaching that a life-long union is entered into, or established, or brough about, by a rightful betrothal. According to the St. Louis Faculty, in the words of Dr. Sieck, the lifelong union begins "when the parties promise to take each other as man and wife at the wedding ceremony." It is true, the St. Louis Faculty holds that the promise of betrothal "once given, should be kept inviolate," but it immediately adds, "unless indeed such serious situations should arise which would at once preclude a happy married estate between the betrothed." By all this the St. Louis Faculty declares that the promise given at the wedding ceremony may not be broken except for fornication and malicious desertion; but that when a man and a woman with the consent of their parents promise faithfulness to each other and thereby become engaged — *that promise may be broken* for other reasons outside of fornication and malicious desertion.

3. Church Discipline

The Catechism reads: "Excommunication is intended, not for the eternal ruin of the excommunicated, but for the salvation of his soul." (Question 282.)

Gain thy brother! — that is the dominant thought of the entire instruction of our Lord in Matt. 18. Church discipline is an act of love.

In the interview between Dr. Sieck and Mr. Strumpler (cf. *Confessional Lutheran*, 1950, 1ff.) Dr. Sieck said, "Would not Matt. 18 require you to come to me in person instead of sending letters all over?" Mr. Strumpler answered, "Matt. 18 is out of the picture once the item appears in public. But if you feel I did wrong, why don't you use church discipline against me?" To this Dr. Sieck replied, "I wouldn't stoop to that."

Either the President of our St. Louis Seminary thereby declared that he would not perform an act of love for one whom he regarded as an erring brother; or, he thereby clearly shows that he does not accept the simple Catechism teaching regarding church discipline. That the latter seems more true is seen from the fact that he regards church discipline as something degrading, as something below his dignity, as something that he would not "stoop to."

What Has Happened at Concordia?

Led by one who at the synodical convention in 1938 insisted that the difference between the former Iowans and Missouri in the doctrine of the Church was a "matter of terminology," the whole St. Louis Faculty has imbibed the false, Iowan doctrine of the Church and is now carrying its unscriptural principles into practice.

Led by another who for twenty-five or more years has tried to write theses acceptable to the former Iowans and the Missourians, only to have them rejected by Missourians as being ambiguous and as compromising the truth, the whole St. Louis Faculty has subscribed to an Opinion, which denies what God clearly and unmistakably commands, and which compromises the Word of God.

Led by still another who has declared that church discipline, a divine ordinance, is something to which he would not stoop, the whole St. Louis Faculty would now grant a dispensation from God's holy Law and thus falls under the condemnation of Christ, "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, *and shall teach men so*, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven."

We have said "the whole St. Louis Faculty." For unless those members of the St. Louis Faculty who still believe and teach the Word of God in all its purity rise up and renounce their subscription to the unscriptural Opinions, their silence must be regarded as a denial of the truth. Unless they confess the truth of God, their silence places them under the same condemnation.

An Unhappy State of Affairs

We are naturally deeply grieved at this unhappy state of affairs in St. Louis. As a high synodical official remarked some time ago: When a person has worked all his lifetime for the Missouri Synod and then sees it destroyed from within, it hurts. Our business is to testify to the truth and leave the results to God.

If it is God's will that Missouri should go the way of most other Lutheran churches and succumb to rationalism, moralism, externalism, indifferentism, unionism, Romanism, and sectarianism, if His grace departs from us and our children, if He takes His Word from us — we have richly deserved it.

But God in His mercy may yet give Missouri grace to repent and to return to its former ways. He may yet give Missouri the grace earnestly to contend for the faith once delivered unto the saints, confess the Word of God in all its truth and purity, and cease hobnobbing with persistent errorists. He may yet give Missouri courageous and faithful leaders, who true to their oath of office, will promptly and without respect of persons not only admonish but also take effective action against any member of Synod who teaches error and who is guilty of unscriptural practice.

It Is Now Up To You

Again and again we have received the assurance: When the time comes, then we will speak up and take becoming action. That time HAS come, and we are calling upon you to make good your pledge and TO TAKE EFFECTIVE ACTION. You cannot rely on others to do this for you. You yourself must discharge this responsibility.

Past experience shows that it is useless to call upon present synodical officials to take effective action in this matter. Paraphrasing the words of Spurgeon, we may well say that responsible synodical officials have drifted into compromises which they could not at first propose, but which they seem forced to justify. Yielding to be the creatures of circumstances, they have allowed others to gird them, and lead them whither they would not; and now they find themselves in an undesirable position and do not have the resolution to break away from it.

God willing, these matters will all be brought to the attention of Synod at the Milwaukee convention. The delegates of our congregations, the highest authority in Synod, will be asked to take note of the exact situation in Synod and to correct these evils in our midst. Those who would like to have suggestions regarding memorials to Synod are asked to get in touch with the Cor-

responding Secretary of the Chicago Study Club, the Rev. H. D. Mensing of Tinley Park, Illinois.

If you are present in Milwaukee, do not merely be a spectator, but testify to the truth. Open your mouth and speak. If you are not a delegate to the Milwaukee convention, get in touch with your representative, especially the lay-delegate. See that the delegates are well-grounded in the Word of God. Give them authentic information concerning the exact conditions in Synod. Tell them exactly what position you expect them to take as your representative. Write to Synod itself.

Do not, even for a moment, imagine that all these things do not concern you, that the position which the Milwaukee convention will take will have no effect on your work in your own congregation. St. Paul says, "Whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it," I Cor. 12:26.

We of the *Confessional Lutheran* staff have testified to the truth of God's Word to the best of our ability, as God has given us His grace. We shall continue to urge others to raise their voice and speak. Silence under these conditions is a denial of the truth.

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." II Cor. 10:4, 5.

VERBUM DEI VINCIT!

D.

Chicago Study Club, November 15 and 16, 1949

Again we had a meeting which was both informative and encouraging. The word "encouraging" is used with deliberation and discrimination. The information which we received was for the most part not at all encouraging but saddening; yet the concern manifested by so many brethren in matters which have nothing to do with budgets or church politics, but which affect the apprehension and confession of "God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure" and a becoming grief "for the affliction of Joseph," was indeed a heartening and encouraging evidence of the unity of faith and purpose which still exists among many brethren of our Synod.

The very informative and historically detailed paper which has been read in several previous

meetings by Pastor A. T. Kretzmann, and which should soon be available for private or local conference study, was at this meeting brought to a conclusion. The previous sections having supplied information on the present situation in Synod, he now treated the topic of what Scripture demands of those who know, and the evasions of the Scriptural demand which are permitting error to continue to eat as a canker.

Two papers were presented on the topic: "How to deal with unionism in one's own fellowship." The first, by Pastor emeritus J. Buenger, was read by Pastor Erwin A. Wiedbusch. The second was presented by the undersigned. The two papers mutually supplemented each other, the first in an illuminating manner drawing the lessons of history and showing their practical bearing on our present situation, the second emphasizing the importance of considerations having to do with congregational welfare. The discussion of these two papers was not brought to a conclusion and will doubtless be continued in our next meeting.

Mr. H. A. Strumpler, St. Louis layman, presented a very eloquent and interesting report on his controversy with Dr. Sieck regarding the unscriptural "faculty opinion" on "Engagement Not Tantamount to Marriage" which had been published in the *St. Louis Lutheran*.

Illuminating reports on conditions in Germany and the doings of Missouri Synod representatives there were presented on the basis of quotations from the letters of several correspondents across the seas.

The continuation of Dr. Dierks' report on "Scriptural Aims for the 1950 Convention" led to the signing of several Memorials to the Synod in Convention assembled by those present who cared to sign at this time. In this connection I wish to correct a statement made in my report of the September meeting to the effect that those who desire copies of suggested Memorials on various subjects should address such request to the committee there named. By action of the November meeting such requests are to be addressed not to the committee but to the corresponding secretary of the Chicago Study Club, Rev. H. David Mensing, 159th and Oak Park Avenue, Tinley Park, Illinois.

Since the Chicago Study Club is engaging to a greater extent than heretofore in the publishing of various materials of general interest to the brethren, the group elected a treasurer for the first time, and resolved that the incumbent of this office be a member of the Planning Committee. Contributions from congregations and societies for furthering the publication activity of the

group are solicited, and should be sent to the treasurer, Rev. Fred E. Bartling, 120 South Prater Avenue, Northlake Village, Melrose Park 3, Illinois.

W. H. M.

② Further Success in Germany

During the year 1948 we were able to report that our brethren in the Lutheran Free Church of Germany had succeeded in achieving doctrinal unity with the Synod of Breslau ("Ev. Luth. Kirche Altpreussens") and that the two bodies, of about equal size, had established fraternal relations with each other. (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, April, 1948; February, 1949.) We are happy now to be able to report further success, under God, on the part of our Free Church brethren. For, as we write these lines, it is in view of the prospect that before they reach the reader, our Free Church brethren will have established fellowship with the Independent Ev. Luth. Church in Baden, Hessen, and Niedersachsen. This would mean doctrinal unity and fellowship between nearly all of the Lutheran free churches in Germany. The pertinent documents, which are in our hands, and with which we fully agree, were to be submitted to all congregations concerned, and, each one of them was asked to declare itself separately with respect to its approval or disapproval of these documents by the latter part of November, when it was hoped fellowship relations could be consummated. There was included a declaration not to have anything, to do with the EKid (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*, the unionistic "Evangelical Church in Germany"), "directly or indirectly," the latter meaning through entanglement with a Lutheran State or Provincial Church, such churches being members of the EKid.

Our Free Church brethren really faced differences and removed them through honest agreement on the basis of the Word of God in order to bring about this union. The following summary statement of the fundamental principle governing the establishment of fellowship relations is included in the documents of agreement: "A faithful Lutheran Church can cultivate altar and pulpit fellowship only with such churches as are one with it in the whole doctrine of the Word of God and whose practice is also in accord with Scripture and Confession." II John 10, 11, Gal. 5, 9, and Mt. 28, 20 are here adduced as prooftexts. The case of being in *statu confessionis* is at the same time correctly defined, and attention is called to the fact that our Free Church brethren had already previously been able to extend the

hand of fellowship to Pastor Friedr. Wilh. Hopf on such grounds while he was yet externally connected with the Lutheran State or Provincial Church in Bavaria, which is affiliated with the EKID. (He has since been deposed by Bishop Meiser of the Bavarian Provincial Church because of his testimony against affiliation with the EKID, and continues to serve some of his members as a Free Church congregation.)

Prof. W. M. Oesch, who had been the representative of our Free Church brethren in its negotiations with the Breslau Synod, was also the chief negotiator with the Independent Ev. Lutheran Church of Baden, Hessen, and Niedersachsen.

When one reviews the success with which our Free Church brethren in Germany have met, under God, and their strict adherence to the divinely ordained method through which they were led to such success, one cannot help but exclaim, with much sadness of heart: Would to God that such methods were more generally employed among us, without compromise of any kind! Then we might also, under God, look for like success. For it is still true that the "foolishness" of God is wiser than men, and the "weakness" of God is stronger than men, I Cor. 1, 25.

If we want a truly *strong* Lutheran Church throughout the world, here is the way to it!

P. H. B.

❁ Significant Information from Germany

Dr. P. E. Kretzmann

The following items are taken from unimpeachable sources and should prove of value both in correcting current false reports and in serving for a lesson and a warning to the indifferent and hesitant brethren in our midst.

Pfarrer Friedrich Wilhelm Hopf, formerly of Muehlhausen, Oberfranken, who, for the sake of a conscience bound by the Word of God, refused to join the unionistic organization known as the EKID, although the Bavarian Church was prominent in the movement, was compelled, under threat of legal procedure, to evacuate the parsonage at Muehlhausen and move to a tiny Catholic hamlet at a distance of four kilometers, cut off from most of the association which he formerly enjoyed. In the midst of all these difficulties, however, he is thankful that he is still able to serve his small group of faithful orthodox confessors, and he hopes that it will be possible for the tiny congregation to build a small chapel in the not too distant future. We are wondering whether

the news of Pfarrer Hopf's deposition and the persecution which he was forced to endure will give any satisfaction to those men, in Germany and in America, who were instrumental in promoting the movement against him.

* * * *

Just before the end of November the Ev. Luth. Free Church of Saxony, which had already entered into fellowship with the Ev. Luth. Church in Old Prussia and with the Breslau Synod, declared itself in full doctrinal agreement with the *Selbständige ev.-luth. Kirche*, so that almost all the free churches of Germany are now united by a full confession of faith. The propositions of agreement have been published in a number of church papers in America and will certainly meet with the approval of all those who are seeking a union in the truth.

* * * *

Since the statement has repeatedly been made in the Lutheran circles of America, that the EKID (Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland) is not to be considered a "church," it is interesting and valuable to get information from Germany, from men who have the situation before their eyes at all times and not only during a Bad Boll interlude. Attaching his remarks to the report in the *Lutheraner* our authority writes: "With regard to the situation in the churches of Germany the American brethren have permitted themselves to be told once more that the EKID 'is not a church but merely an alliance (Bund), which was formed chiefly on account of external matters, as for example, the question of education, the question of refugees, etc.' Over against this attempt to make the entire procedure appear harmless with reference to facts which no theologian could bring into agreement with the Lutheran Confession, it must be definitely stated that — apart from all other considerations — the 'Constitution of the EKID,' as every reader of this sad document knows, definitely does not merely speak of an affiliation 'on account of external matters,' but that it regulates the relation between the Lutheran, the Reformed, and the United (uniert) membership churches absolutely in the sense of a new union. We beg our Lutheran brethren abroad to examine the wording of the 'Constitution,' as accepted by all *Landeskirchen* and acknowledged by church law and then to give us public notice, whether *they* in *their* country could belong to an affiliation with that kind of a foundation or not, whether according to their judgment the 'Constitution' can be brought into accord with the Lutheran Confession or not, whether according to principles of ecclesiastical order and the building up of a congregation a

Lutheran pastor, over against a church government which is bound by decisions that are contrary to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, is bound to submit or to oppose. In connection with this request we at the same time express our conviction that our Lutheran brethren abroad neither can nor may shirk the duty of a public testimony for any length of time for or against the way of the German *Landeskirchen*, particularly since their attitude in this question is bound to have serious consequences for their own churches. We finally call their attention to the fact that maintaining a further silence with respect to the decisive questions now before us will be understood as a form of agreement with the way of the *Landeskirchen* and will be used for propaganda purposes. We ourselves have repeatedly had the experience that in the battle against the confessionally Lutheran minorities the argument carried much weight: 'Even the Missourians' have a different conception of the EKID! We indeed know that in this assertion the unauthorized expressions of individuals are abused in a species of church politics and have been charged against the Missouri Synod as such altogether unjustly. But it is our opinion that even this could and should be made impossible by a testimony that is as open as it is public."

From what we have heard and read with regard to the Bad Boll meetings and the various more or less public conferences in matters of the Lutherans in Germany, we are inclined to nod to the brother in Germany and, using a bit of American slang, tell him: "You've got something there, brother."

● Evils Resulting from the Denial of Simple Catechism Truth Concerning the Church: Papism and Bureaucratism

In the *Confessional Lutheran*, 1948, p. 100, we wrote these words: "Actually in the false doctrine of the 'visible side' of the invisible Church, we have the *inception* or *beginnings* of papism, bureaucratism, sacerdotalism, sacramentalism, millennialism, social-gospelism, legalism, fundamentalism, indifferentism, unionism, and many other 'isms' now plaguing the Lutheran Church.

We have been asked to enlarge on that statement. We shall do so, confining ourselves for the present to a discussion of papism and bureaucratism as it results from a perversion of the doctrine of the Church.

The Simple Catechism Truth

"All believers are a communion of saints, or one spiritual body, whose one and only Head is Christ." (*Catechism*, Ques. 177.)

It is in the denial of this simple Catechism truth that we have the source of practically all the evils now plaguing the Christian Church on earth.

Papism

The Roman Catholic Church insists that the body of Christ is that external, visible organization of which the pope is the head. Papists argue: Since the Church is a visible body therefore it must have a visible head. The pope claims to be that visible head and as such assumes an authority over the believers in the Church which was not given to him by Christ. That is the essence of papism.

"Ye are a royal priesthood," says the Apostle I Pet. 2:9. As "kings and priests unto God," Rev. 1:6, believers are subject only to Christ and governed by the law of love. "This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you," John 15:12. All the rights and privileges and liberties which Christ has purchased by His blood and which He has given to His Church are theirs. "All things are yours," I Cor. 3:21.

This is one of the great truths with which Martin Luther overthrew the papacy of his day. And it is this truth which needs special emphasis in our day, if believers are not to lose their priceless liberties, rights, and privileges.

In the Church of God no human being has the right to exercise any human authority over the believers. "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. *But it shall not be so among you,*" Matt. 20:25, 26.

Because of the believers found within its midst, a local congregation, the only church organization ordained by God and recognized as functioning in the New Testament, exercises certain rights and privileges; for example, to judge the doctrine according to the Word of God, to administer the Office of the Keys in its midst, etc., etc. But even the congregation dare never *assume* a human authority over the believers.

The congregation is supreme in all matters relating to it, but it should always subject itself to Christ and the law of love. That is true also when a congregation joins with other congregations in a synod in order to consult and work together in the interest of Christ's kingdom. But it is also true when representatives meet with the representatives of other congregations in conven-

tion. Such a convention also has no right to *assume* a human authority over any congregation, be it great or small. Also at a convention Christ and His law of love must remain the supreme rulers. Hence the statement recently heard at a convention, that "the congregation has supreme authority at home; but here we are meeting as a synod" must be rejected because of its papistical implications.

In this connection we may add that the officials of Synod are and must ever remain the servants of the congregations. The officials perform their duties in the name and by the authority of the local congregations. If they fail to perform their sacred duties they are unfaithful to the trust committed to them by Christ and betray the "kings and priests unto God" within such congregations.

Papism is also found where pastors assume an authority over the local congregation or over the individual believers, which they have not received from Christ. The pastors are not to be lords over God's heritage, but shepherds who feed the flock of God, I Pet. 5:2, 3. Only when pastors can say: "Thus saith the Lord!", can and dare they demand obedience from those entrusted to their spiritual care. Then, and then alone, does Heb. 13:17 apply. In every other case it is papism — the unwarranted assumption of human authority over the "kings and priests unto God."

Bureaucratism

Closely allied with the evil of papism is the evil of bureaucratism, the concentration of *power* in the hands of ecclesiastical officials. And that evil may threaten to engulf any church-body as soon as it becomes a large organization.

At first certain work of the Church is done during spare time by men who hold some other office. As the work expands, a full-time man may be engaged and his "office" gradually becomes another bureau in the Church. The "executive secretary" of a bureau naturally needs clerical help and may even need an assistant, perhaps, to do some of the field-work.

Reams and reams of expensive paper are printed and mailed out to the pastors, giving them information and detailed plans as to how to run the affairs of their congregations more efficiently. Pastors are also asked to send in the names of their congregational officers as well as the officers of their societies so that they may be approached directly and receive the benefits of a bureau's program. As one old pastor once put it: "I have tried to serve my Lord and Savior for nearly fifty years according to the best of my ability. But according to all the material now

coming to my desk, I didn't know anything. My ministry, according to all these new fangled ideas, seems to have been a complete failure."

Bureaucratic thinking tends to develop travel with accommodations "befitting the dignity" of the organization represented. The Church pays. National, sectional, regional, area meetings are arranged, and men are called in from near and far. The Church pays. An "executive" may even conceive the thought of inviting a number of men to a palatable dinner to get them into the right frame of mind. The Church pays.

By all such activity the impression is fostered that the particular work in question is a *sine qua non* within the Church, and that the Church could hardly carry on its mission of saving souls without such special help.

Bureaucratism costs money; much money. Bureaucrats have a way of convincing the responsible boards or committees of the absolute need of spending just so much money. Of course, in emergencies a few thousand dollars are shaved off the bureau's budget, but when a depression hits a Church it is usually the workers in the outlying mission fields who first receive a cut in salary.

As in the government, so ecclesiastical bureaucrats are usually not elected, but appointed, to office, by some official or by some board. They usually hold a life-time position and though subject to the supervision of certain boards or some officials of a synod, they assume an authority in the Church which the Church never intended to give them. They become the "men behind the throne," the men who often exert a greater influence in the Church than the elected officials, the men who at times even control the elected officials.

Bureaucrats have a way of banding together, and as a result a powerful machine is built up within a Church over against which the congregations are finally practically helpless, EXCEPT THROUGH A MAJOR UPHEAVAL. Certain men who are in the ring are appointed to certain key positions, and thus conventions of the representatives of the "priests and kings unto God" are controlled and ruled by an officialdom, which has been known to take false teachers under its wings and to ignore and violate the rights of the "kings and priests unto God."

The Rights of Our Congregations

Our Synod was organized for a "united defense against schism and sectarianism" and for the "protection of pastors, teachers, and congregations in the performance of their duties and the maintenance of their rights."

A basic right of every congregation is to receive protection against the sowing of false, unscriptural teaching in its midst, particularly by those who claim its fellowship. Faithful pastors in our Synod who are trying to protect their congregations against the false teaching now being spread in their midst, especially by the *Lutheran Witness*, the official organ of Synod, are finding this exceedingly difficult. Why?

Is it, perhaps, because all evangelical action against the editors of the *Lutheran Witness* is hampered and delayed and blocked by an un-evangelical officialdom?

Again and again we hear the words: "You must first take this step and then that step." "If that does not improve the situation, then try something else." "This is not the proper time and the proper place to consider such matters." "You must consider and safeguard the rights of the accused." Etc., etc.

Meanwhile the rights of the "kings and priests unto God" are grossly violated and ignored.

Some Pertinent Questions

Complaints against the *Lutheran Witness* have been placed into the hands of the President of Synod since as long ago as 1940, if not earlier than that.

Why was the direct charge of false doctrine, filed against the *Lutheran Witness* by a congregation with its sister congregations at the Chicago convention, not brought to the attention of the representatives of these congregations? Why was such a serious charge buried under "Un-printed Reports and Memorials" and in some committee?

Why were the memorials submitted by fifteen congregations to their sister congregations at the Chicago convention not printed in the "Report and Memorials" of the Chicago convention?

Why was the Report of the President's Committee on *A Statement* not sent to all the pastors of the Missouri Synod as urged by that committee?

Is that according to the law of love? Is that evangelical?

Our Lord has given to the "kings and priests unto God" within the Missouri Synod the right to have the facts of what is being taught and done within their fellowship presented to them and to judge the doctrine that is taught in their midst.

Have the "kings and priests unto God" within the Missouri Synod no longer the right to know the facts?

Have the "kings and priests unto God" within the Missouri Synod no longer the right to judge the doctrine which is taught in their midst?

"Kings and priests unto God!" Do not let anyone — no matter who it may be — rob you of your precious rights given to you by the Savior Himself.

"Kings and priests unto God!" To you the Apostle cries out: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage," Gal. 5:1. D.

Some Interesting Figures

In 1947 Synod established a "Department of Public Relations" and instructed and empowered the Fiscal Conference "to allocate ample funds . . . which will compare favorably with those of other leading church bodies." (*Proceedings*, 1947, p. 467f.)

The cost of this Department in 1948 was \$11,995.10. For 1949 this Department had requested \$29,225, but this request was pared down by the Fiscal Conference to \$25,000. For 1950 the Department had requested \$41,660.44. The Fiscal Conference granted \$37,000.

Comparing the 1949 budget of this Department with the amount requested for 1950 we have the following figures:

Salaries

1949 Budget:	Director	\$ 4,000.00
	Washington Sec'y...	2,400.00
	New York Sec'y....	2,500.00
	Total	\$ 8,900.00

Requested for 1950:	Director	\$ 4,800.00
	Washington Sec'y...	3,000.00
	New York Sec'y....	2,700.00
	News writer	3,500.00

Total

\$ 14,000.00

"The all-important first duty assigned to our department by Synod . . . has progressed to the point where a writer is necessary to gather and write synodical news for release to the increasing number of editors requesting our service."

Rent

1949 Budget:	New York Office....	\$ 1,800.00
	Washington Office...	600.00

Total

Requested for 1950:	New York Office....	\$ 1,800.00
	Washington Office...	760.44

Total

\$ 2,560.44

Initial Repairs and Improvements on Director's Home

1949 Budget: Rent\$1,700.00
Requested for 1950\$3,500.00

"The item of rent has been removed from the 1950 budget because of the purchase of a house for the director in New York. The sum allotted to repairs and improvements is a one-time expenditure and will not be repeated."

News Bureau — Supplies, Mimeographing, Postage

1949 Budget\$1,800.00
Requested for 1950.....\$2,000.00

Office Maintenance

(Telephone, telegraph, stationery, printing, postage)

1949 Budget: New York Office....\$ 5,225.00
Washington Office... 1,500.00

Total\$ 6,725.00

Requested for 1950

New York Office....\$ 5,400.00
Washington Office... 1,000.00

Total\$ 6,400.00

Library — Books, Subscriptions

(RNS, newsletters, magazine, etc.)

1949 Budget\$400.00
Requested for 1950\$300.00

"Proposed expenditures have been cut to the most essential needs."

Board Meetings

1949 Budget\$1,800.00
Requested for 1950\$1,800.00

"Board meetings are held three times annually at a spot reached most economically by all members."

Public Relations Seminar

1949 Budget\$2,500.00
Requested for 1950\$3,000.00

Travel

1949 Budget\$3,000.00
Requested for 1950\$3,500.00

"Effective public relations work requires organization and contacts. Both necessitate a certain amount of travel. Particularly in this area has our department been restricted by the cut in the 1949 budget."

Miscellaneous

1949 Budget
Requested for 1950\$300.00

"This includes an extremely nominal sum for the entertainment of Synod's guests."

1950 Convention

Requested for 1950:

Radio Coverage\$1,250.00
Clip sheet, mats, illustrations..... 1,500.00
Display at Convention 500.00
Travel and Expenses (Press Committee) 750.00

Total\$4,000.00

(The above facts and figures are taken from *Fiscal Conference*, Prospectus and Minutes, St. Louis, Mo., September 7 and 8, 1949, pp. 93-97.)

We have been reliably informed that the Public Relations Department of Synod calls for District departments, which may spend from one to several thousand dollars a year per District. Thus a synod-wide expenditure of approximately eighty to one hundred thousand dollars per year for public relations would be the net result.

D.

② A Word To Laymen

*Rev. Herm. Harms, First Vice-President,
Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod*

"If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed."

Not to the Apostles, but to laymen Jesus was first addressing these words.

Your theme "For Christ" (convention motto. "For Christ and Country," 25th Anniversary convention Lutheran Laymen's League) means continuous and conscientious support of all endeavors to keep the purity of doctrine.

Our age has been called an age of indifferentism and unionism. With indifferentism in this connection we mean carelessness as to purity of doctrine. Indifferentism is a dangerous thing, a deadly poison, a spiritual carbon monoxide, which comes unawares, unnoticed, but at once overcomes its victim. Indifferentism has always been the beginning of the end of the churches. And a kind of indifferentism is unionism, a union without unity. . . . In this day of "united nations," united efforts, necessity of standing united, also the churches are called upon by all means to unite, to ignore differences, at least, so-called unessentials, in order to offer a united front against the common enemy, Satan and his accursed crew, against unbelief and ungodliness.

However, world conditions are different than church conditions. With might of united nations and weapons, even though different political, economic, and social views are held and advocated, much can be done in a carnal, earthly war. But carnal weapons, large outward church organizations, are in themselves no formidable bulwark in the cause of Christ. Here

"With might of ours can naught be done,
Soon were our loss effected."

In the cause of Christ there is only one power that counts, the power of Christ which is active in His Word and in His Word of truth alone. "The truth shall make you free." Here the line of Luther's song is true,

"One little Word can fell him."

And that little word no matter how little it may be and how unimportant and unessential it may seem, we must keep in pulpit and in pew if we are to be and remain a powerful church. Every little word that slips away dulls the two-edged sword of the Word and weakens the Church. The Church which stands foursquare on the Bible and refuses to make common cause with even the least error may stand alone against a host; yet it will always be in the majority. The Church, however, that is indifferent against "the least written in this book," Rev. 22:18, 19, will become decrepit, feeble, weak, as church history sufficiently reveals, the Bible clearly teaches, and our own beloved country experiences. The churches of our country as a whole have lost their power, because they have lost one little word after another. . . .

In this day when our Church is again much maligned because it will not give in one iota of Christ's Word, let us, pastors and people, clergymen and laymen, to whom jointly God has entrusted His Word, stand upon the Word of Christ. For Christ and His Word, and every jot and tittle of it! United upon the Word of our God, our Church was strong in the past. And only when it remains united upon His Word will it remain strong.

Convention Address, Lutheran
Laymen's League, 1942.

ON THE UNION FRONT

West Coast

Taking the place of the defunct *Lutheran Council of Washington* is a new organization called *Associated Lutheran Welfare*. According

to the purpose listed in the By-Laws, we find that the new organization aspires to conduct "enterprises of a religious, educational, missionary and charitable nature as may be deemed necessary for the moral, social, physical or spiritual uplift of the community." Article IX, Section 8, of the By-Laws, reads:

"The Institutional Missions Department shall act as a co-ordinating agency for institutional missions and institutional chaplains in the state. It shall endeavor to supply all public institutions with Lutheran chaplains and to give spiritual ministry to those who are in and those who are discharged from public institutions."

Thus far it seems that the only enterprise the new organization controls is a home for unwed mothers, in which an Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norw.) pastor and a Statementarian Missouri Synod pastor conduct devotions. Another Statementarian Missouri pastor is a member of the Board of Directors.

We have here a cooperation in far more than physical matters, and a written platform that takes inter-Lutheran unionism for granted.

Denver Laymen Hold Men's Rally

Under this heading there is a news item in *The Lutheran* (Sept. 14, 1949, p. 44), from which we quote the following paragraphs:

"We are standing on the threshold of a golden age of man . . . God may be permitting Communism as a mighty scourge to wipe out the weaknesses of the church in order that there may come a new birth of the power and influence of Christianity. . . . Its effectiveness may be greater than ever before. . . . With patience and courage to go forward we shall accomplish untold good for all mankind."

"So spoke Dr. Elmer S. Hjortland, pastor of Central Church (ELC), Minneapolis, Minnesota, to Lutheran Men of Denver at their rally August 10. This group includes laymen of all synodical bodies. Pastors of the area were their guests. The meeting was held at the Lutheran Sanatorium (Missouri Synod).

"A project of 'Lutheran Men of Denver' is sponsoring the radio Bible Quiz on Radio Station KOA beginning this month."

Sunday Evening Club

On November 20, 1949, the Rev. A. R. Kretzmann, Statementarian Missouri Synod pastor, was the speaker for the Chicago Sunday Evening Club at Orchestra Hall. An introductory "Bible address" and the Benediction were given by the sectarian Director of the Sunday Evening Club.

This institution celebrated its silver anniversary a couple of years ago. On that occasion it was claimed that the Sunday Evening Club had done more in Chicago to break down denominational isolationism and bring the different denominations together than anything else.

It seems that rank unionism with sectarians has to come in the wake of "mild" unionism. One of our correspondents writes that a unionist is never satisfied; he continually feels the urge to expand his activities farther and farther afield.

The L. M. of A. in Wisconsin

Another meeting of Lutheran Men of America in Wisconsin was held in November, 1949. Three hundred men of different Lutheran bodies were reported to be in attendance at this dinner meeting. Doctrinal differences were not aired. The press picture shows two ministers of other Lutheran bodies with Dr. O. P. Kretzmann, Missouri Synod Statementarian, who was speaker for the occasion.

More Milwaukee Affairs

Our readers from all Synods will be highly interested in a couple of items in the *Milwaukee Journal*. On November 14 a report appeared with the headings "Lutheran Spat Given Airing. Missouri Synod Hit." The Rev. B. A. Maurer, Missouri Synod pastor, had spoken before a meeting of the National Lutheran Council Ministerium of Milwaukee, bringing a plea to "keep the outside door open, and some day you will find the Missouri Synod saying, 'Please, may we come in?'"

S. O. B.'s

One paragraph deserves quotation: "Within his synod, said Mr. Maurer, the 'S. O. B.'s — superorthodox brethren' who raise minute questions of doctrine, are opposed by others 'of more charitable leanings who have insisted that a 1% disagreement in a smaller matter does not cancel out a 99% agreement in all of the great fundamental doctrines'."

In a letter to the editor of the newspaper, published a few days later, the Rev. Maurer insisted that he "spoke at a very congenial gathering on Lutheran union," that he "hit at no Synod," and "did not apply epithets to anyone."

This "S. O. B." business is uncalled for, following, as it does, the whole unfortunate "S. O. B." episode in which President Truman involved himself, and from which the latter had drawn just criticism from decent people the nation over. Since then, we had been informed that an "S.

O. B." epithet was being applied by a certain Missouri Synod brother to certain of his brethren from time to time. It finally hit the newspaper columns.

It is one thing to parade under the banner of love; it is quite another thing to avoid that which is uncouth, in the interest of love. "More charitable leanings!"

The Scriptural position of the Missouri Synod is that "complete agreement" in doctrine is necessary for union or fellowship. "Complete" means 100%, also in details or "smaller matters" of Bible doctrine.

Are only "minute questions of doctrine" involved in the problem of Lutheran unity? Who will call the Verbal Inspiration and also the Authority of the Bible, the matter of human will in Conversion, to mention only a few items on which American Lutherans differ, "minute questions of doctrine"? *O. simplicity!*

A. L. S.

The third annual conference of the Association of Lutheran Seminarians was held October 26 through 28, 1949, at Wartburg Theological Seminary of the American Lutheran Church at Dubuque, Iowa. The theme of the conference was "The Lutheran Church, Its Challenge." No discussion of doctrinal differences among Lutherans is announced on the program. The students, including official delegates from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, listened to classroom lectures and special lectures, one on "Preaching" being delivered by the Rev. Herbert Lindemann, one of the original 44 Statementarians. Morning and evening devotions were a part of the program, conducted on two occasions by Dr. E. Matzner, Dr. M. Reu's successor and outspoken A. L. C. Millennialist. (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, 1949, pp. 70f., 108f., 130f.)

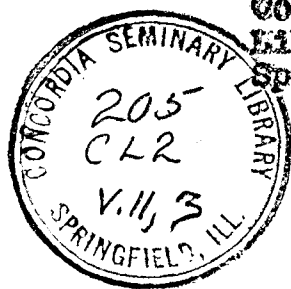
Ought not some one among the Missouri Synod's St. Louis faculty, or the Praesidium, at long last, raise his voice against this unionism?

A. V. K.

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

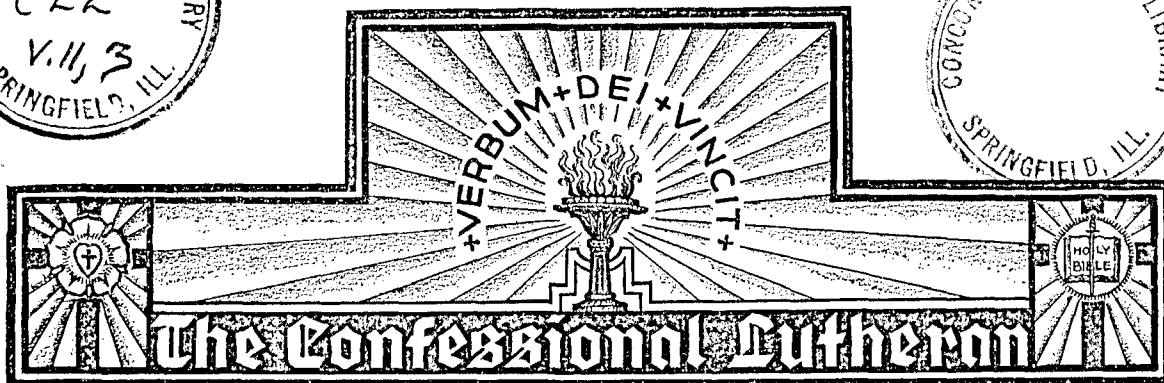
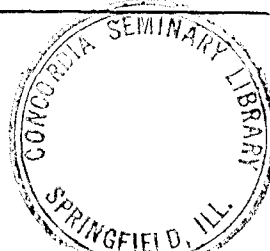
THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD



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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

MARCH, 1950

NUMBER 3

IN THIS ISSUE: Editorial — The Synodical Committee Report on the Question of the Missouri Synod's Becoming a Participating Body in the National Lutheran Council — Special Laymen's Meeting Held in Connection with the Chicago Study Club, January 31, 1950 — An Evaluation of German Theology During the Last Decade — "For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you," Luke 17:21 — On the Union Front — Review of Publications.

● Editorial

There are people who must be said to be ignorant because they know so much that isn't true. For instance, some people know that the moon is made of green cheese. One meets with much of such ignorance also in people who profess to be members of the Church, and even among some who want to be accepted as teachers by it. For instance, there are those who "know" that the world was not created in six days, that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all Christian doctrine, that there is a visible body of Christ on earth, etc.

Now, what should be our attitude over against such ignorance? Holy Scripture does not leave us in doubt as to the answer to this question. Our attitude over against ignorance in matters of Christian doctrine should first of all be one of pity; and if such ignorance is due to weakness, that is, to a lack of proper understanding, we should be ready to offer instruction. (Acts 18, 26; 19, 4-5.) Genuine weakness will also show itself by willingness to accept correction. (Cp. Book of Concord, *Trigl. Edit.*, p. 19f; 233.) However, ignorance becomes culpable if one refuses the reproof and correction for which Holy Scripture is given, II Tim. 3, 16. In such a case

THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN

Published in the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism

By the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau

(One Dollar Per Year)

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Articles intended for publication are to be addressed to the office of publication: Box 73, Clinton, Iowa.

Subscriptions (\$1.00 per year) are to be sent to
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Holy Scripture says: "If any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant!" (1 Cor. 14, 38.) *In no case is one who remains ignorant in Christian doctrine to be tolerated as a teacher in the Church,* "lest, perhaps," as the Lutheran Church says in her Book of Concord (*Trigl. Edit.*, p. 21) "while the blind are leaders of the blind, all may perish." On this matter not only the Lutheran Church, but also Holy Scripture, has spoken in no uncertain terms.

P. H. B.

P. H. B.

The amazing assertion that non-fundamental doctrines — teachings of Holy Scripture, mind you — “have no connection with the foundation of our faith” is part of the newest teaching of Prof. Wm. Arndt, Ph. D., D. D., Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, as re-

vealed in his essay, "Present Hindrances to Lutheran Union" (p. 21), read before the 1949 conventions of the California and Nevada District and of the Southern California District of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. This error, which has appeared here for the first time, at least in print, within the Missouri Synod, is just another one in the long and growing list of errors taught by Dr. Arndt, chairman of the Missouri Synod's committee on doctrinal unity in the Lutheran Church[es] of America, — errors which have served as one of the very greatest hindrances to Lutheran unity during these years.

Think of it! Holy Scripture, "the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets" is indeed "the inerrant foundation upon which God's Church is built, Eph. 2, 20; 1 Pet. 1, 10-12." (J. T. Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 90.) It is the "organic" foundation of our faith, as we like to say. As such it is the one and only, unalterable source, norm, and rule of Christian doctrine, as well as of Christian life. The Lutheran Church says in her historic confession: "We receive and embrace with our whole heart the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as *the pure, clear fountain* of Israel, which is the only true standard by which all teachers and doctrine are to be judged." And again it says, with special reference to the laity, that they, "must for their salvation distinguish between pure and false doctrine." (*Trigl. Conc.*, p. 851.853; our emphasis.) We believe that just about every one will admit that it is a "non-fundamental" doctrine of Holy Scripture that we should provide for our own, also in earthly things. Yet Scripture itself assures us that there is between this doctrine and the foundation of our faith such a connection that "if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel," 1 Tim. 5, 8. Yet no one less than the chairman of our intersynodical committee, a professor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, has now (retrogressively) advanced sufficiently in his liberalism to deny that such doctrines of Holy Scripture have any connection with the foundation of faith at all!

How much time will the Missouri Synod lose in ridding itself of such pernicious error? How much time are you going to let it lose toward doing so?

P. H. B.

P. H. B.

That he does not know the nature of true confessional unity as required by God has again been revealed by Dr. Arndt in the essay referred to above (p. 21).

Absolute unity is a unity so perfect that even the possibility of momentary error, though due to weakness and corrected instantly, is excluded by

it. Such unity will be attained by the Church only in heaven, when it becomes the Church Triumphant. While such unity must remain the constant goal of the Church's striving (Phil. 3, 12), only the most rabid chiliast could hope that it will ever be attained on earth. But the Church can and should be fundamentally agreed with regard to all Scriptural doctrine in its confession.

All of this has been correctly taught and confessed with great clearness and emphasis by our synodical fathers: for instance, by Dr. Walther in *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. XIV. Dr. Arndt has evidently read what Dr. Walther has written on this subject (or/and possibly some distortion of it, such as that of the deceased Dr. Reu or of Dr. Theo. Graebner). Failing completely to understand matters at issue, he has jumped to the wrong conclusion that since absolute unity is not possible on earth, unity in so-called non-fundamental doctrines is not necessary in a church's teaching and confession. His false position regarding confessional fellowship is stated in the following words: "Church fellowship is not made impossible by the existence of error in the views of an individual or of a church body, provided these errors are of a non-fundamental nature and the right attitude toward Christ and the Word of God are maintained."

Such a position we must reject with our whole heart. With Walther, our whole Church, and Scripture itself, we believe, teach, and confess that no one is to be tolerated as a teacher in the Church who persists in departing even a hair's breadth from the Word of God, and that church-fellowship dare not be established or permanently maintained with a church body which elevates error to a position of dominance or accords it a place of equal right with the truth in its confession (both of which the American Lutheran Church, for instance, insists on doing with respect to various doctrines), however patiently we may deal with an individual or a church body which does either of these. "We repudiate *unionism*, that is, church-fellowship with the adherents of false doctrine, as disobedience to God's command, as causing divisions in the Church, Rom. 16, 17; II John 9, 10, and as involving the constant danger of losing the Word of God entirely, II Tim. 2, 17-21." (*Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*, Sect. 28.)

Dr. Arndt himself lacks one of the essential qualifications demanded by Holy Scripture of a teacher in the Church, — "sound speech that cannot be condemned" in matters of doctrine, Titus 2, 1-8. How long will it be before the Missouri Synod takes proper note of this fact, and becoming action with regard to it?

P. H. B.

● The Synodical Committee Report on the Question of the Missouri Synod's Becoming a Participating Body in the National Lutheran Council

The committee which was to study the question of the Missouri Synod's becoming a participating body in the National Lutheran Council has performed its task and has laid down its findings in a report which was mailed to the ministry of the Missouri Synod. This document contains both the committee report (referred to as "the majority report") and the views of a minority, consisting of a single member of the committee, Mr. W. C. Dickmeyer (called a "minority report").

The advice of the committee report not to participate in the work of the National Lutheran Council as a member is commendable. The reason given for this advice is the fact that the National Lutheran Council is not the same in fact and in practice as it is in theory and on paper. True as this statement no doubt is, the committee report contains a judgment which is extremely strange and incompatible with the spirit of true Lutheranism. From the constitution of the National Lutheran Council the committee quotes the Preamble and several of its articles. The Preamble sets forth the doctrinal basis on which the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council do their work. This doctrinal basis, as the committee rightly states, is subject to various interpretations. The confession to the Holy Scriptures, for instance, is couched in words which believers in the plenary inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures as well as those who reject these truths can accept. The committee furthermore admits that vital differences in doctrine and practice exist in the various church bodies which form the National Lutheran Council. But none of these differences are taken in consideration in the doctrinal basis of the National Lutheran Council on the foundation of which it performs its work. The Preamble keeps on common ground, limiting itself to general truths which all participating bodies still accept, and avoiding existing differences. In other words, it is a unionistic formula which leaves room for various contradictory doctrines.

The committee knows all of this, and still it declares it as its considered opinion "that the Constitution of the National Lutheran Council as it reads contains nothing which would make it sinful for the Missouri Synod to sign." The authors of this opinion try to justify it by pointing to the fact that the Preamble is not meant at all as a confession of faith. Members of the

constituent bodies of the National Lutheran Council have assured them that to them this part of their constitution is merely an expression of a "common faith and general unity of spirit sufficient to warrant their working together in specified common objectives." (P. 5.) In other words, the *intention* of the participating bodies of the National Lutheran Council was not to offer a confession of a common faith in the Preamble, but merely to express their conviction that the measure of agreement which exists among them is sufficient to justify their joint work in church matters. Our committee opines that if that is the case, then the doctrinal statement is all right; that in this case we also could subscribe to it. But could we? According to the National Lutheran Council explanation the Preamble gives expression to the principle that doctrinal differences (and in this case these differences concern even the Holy Scriptures, the foundation of our faith, and the *sola gratia*, the center of the whole Christian doctrine!) are no obstacle to joint work in the Church. This principle is unionistic. For unionism is rightly defined in the *Concordia Cyclopedia* (p. 774) as "joint worship and work of those not united in doctrine. Its essence is an agreement to disagree," condemned in such texts of Holy Scripture as Titus 13, 14; 1 Tim. 2, 12, and many others. But this is exactly what the preamble of the constitution of the National Lutheran Council means according to its admittedly authentic definition. It means to say that as a basis for joint work in the Church an ambiguous declaration which keeps on common ground and leaves room for various doctrinal differences is sufficient. This is a unionistic principle and unacceptable to true Lutherans. Hence true Lutherans cannot accept the opinion of the committee that the Preamble of the Constitution of the National Lutheran Council is unobjectionable and that the Missouri Synod could sign it in the sense in which it is meant. The position of the National Council is wrong not only in practice but also in theory.

Mr. Dickmeyer, the author of the views of the minority, takes advantage of the opinion of the committee that the constitution of the National Lutheran Council is right in theory, and asks: "Why then not join the Council?" He does not accept the distinction between joint prayer and prayer fellowship as set forth in the committee report. And it is true that the principle that joint prayer with representatives of the American Lutheran Church at intersynodical conferences is permissible although prayer fellowship between the two synods has not yet been established has never been shown to be Scriptural.

In these views of the minority there appears a queer misunderstanding of the explanation

which our synodical catechism gives of the words "Our Father" in the Lord's Prayer. In its older edition our catechism gives the following as the reason why we say "Our Father": "Because all believers are in Christ the children of one Father and should therefore pray for and with each other," — a reference to the *Una Sancta*. In praying the Lord's Prayer as we should pray it every Christian indeed does not only pray for himself but for all other Christians also, including the whole Christian Church in the word "we"; and all other Christians who rightly pray this prayer pray for us. Thus the Lord's Prayer is a prayer in which all true Christians the world over join before the throne of God and thus pray — a mighty prayer of faith — for and with each other. Mr. Dickmeyer sees in this answer of the catechism a general rule for the practice of external joint prayer (external union without unity and fellowship) and thinks it our duty to practice such joint prayer with all "Christians" in the world. But the catechism does not here inculcate such joint prayer; it really explains the implications of the use of the words "Our Father" in the Lord's Prayer, which meaning these words have even when a single believer prays the Lord's Prayer in secret.

Finally, Mr. Dickmeyer cannot see why our meeting and working together with the National Lutheran Council should be considered unionistic. It is true, if the doctrinal basis for joint work with this church body were essentially sound and Scriptural, joint work with it would not be unionistic. But, as shown above, joint work with the National Lutheran Council would be unionistic because there is no unity of doctrine between us and the various constituent bodies of the Council.

The report of the committee under discussion as well as the views of the minority show that as soon as our old Scriptural definition of unionism is given up, confusion and uncertainty are bound to follow.

J. B.

● Special Laymen's Meeting Held In Connection With the Chicago Study Club, January 31, 1950

This evening session was a very fine innovation in our program, and will surely be followed up by many similar meetings, if God grants fulfillment of the oft-expressed desire of many in attendance. The meeting had been very carefully planned and the program was efficiently carried out. Three hundred and twenty-five persons crowded the basement of Trinity Church, Oak Park, and joined in singing the battle hymn of the Reformation. The opening devotion was

conducted by Vice-President (of the Northern Illinois District and of the Study Club) A. A. Brauer, who served as moderator for this session. The three laymen and three pastors who presented papers and served as discussion leaders had their material well organized and kept within the allotted time limits, the discussion was free and sufficient, evincing a desire to be informed and eliciting the information desired, yet never unduly prolonged or digressing too far from the subject under consideration. The entire session was encouraging and exhilarating to those who attended it, and will long be remembered as the auspicious beginning of a series of free conferences of laymen and clergy, solicitous for the highest welfare of our confessional fellowship, which we hope may become frequent in our midst.

The first presentation was a brief review of "A Statement" and its false teachings by Mr. Knopp of Chicago. The documents under discussion accompanied by critical annotations by the essayist, had been distributed to those in attendance. The presentation was clear and lucid. Mr. Knopp found the crux of the matter in the doctrine of the verbally inspired Scripture rather than in one or the other of the specifically mentioned doctrines in which "A Statement" shows aberrations from this divine standard. After this summary and basic declaration he presented a brief historical account of the origin of "A Statement." He then pointed out the specific errors in sections 5, 8, 9, and 11, linking not only 5, but also 8, 9, and 11, with the rejection of the native sense of the words of Romans 16, 17, 18. A brief historical account of events subsequent to the issuing of "A Statement" concluded the presentation.

The second presentation dealt with the action of the 1947 Convention in the matter of false doctrine, and was presented by Pastor Romoser. He first pointed out two very good things which Synod did in that convention. It declared that the 1938 Resolutions are no longer a basis for union with the A. L. C., a very salutary and necessary action. It also reaffirmed the Brief Statement of 1932, and thus gave positive expression to its desire to remain upon the old Biblical foundation. To that convention, however, was presented Memorial 616 by ten men who had served the president on the "committee of ten and ten." Since the president had reached an agreement with a committee of the signers totally apart from his committee, he ruled this request out of order because Synod had resolved to restudy these questions. On the other hand, St. John's Congregation, Forest Park, had presented definite and correct doctrinal statements, to which Synod replied that the Brief Statement supports the matters in the Memorial of St.

John's, Forest Park. One thing Synod did not have opportunity to do. It did not definitely reject the error that has been troubling the church. The responsibility for this failure must be laid not to the delegates but to the officials of our Synod, a fact which we certainly are not happy to state, but which is unhappily true. In a brief review of what has happened since the convention Pastor Romoser declared that the 1947 convention had showed its officials that it wanted the truth, that it wanted a settlement of the issues. Finally theses were issued under the president's auspices, but they proved so abstruse that it was impossible to present them to the congregations. Moreover they no longer sounded the clear note of doctrinal soundness. Since 1947 the process of degeneration has continued. Evidence: Association of Lutheran Seminarians; attack on Article III of the Constitution of the Missouri Synod in the *Lutheran Witness*; Dr. Theo. Graebner's pamphlet on "Prayer Fellowship," the false opinion of the St. Louis faculty on Romans 16, 17, 18, and "Speaking the Truth in Love," all used as textbooks or collateral reading at the St. Louis Seminary.

The third topic was a joint presentation by Mr. Strumpler, of St. Louis, and Pastor Dahms, on the St. Louis Faculty's false opinions and teachings. Mr. Strumpler spoke of the false faculty opinion on betrothal, rendered under date of May 24, 1949, which was carried in the *St. Louis Lutheran* of October 1, 1949. Pastor Dahms, in order to keep within the time limits, confined his presentation to the confusion in the doctrine of the Church which has appeared in official publications for which the St. Louis Faculty is responsible.

Dr. Herbert C. Lussy, M. D., of Evanston, Illinois, presented a scholarly and theologically well grounded essay on unionistic activity in Synod, as the fourth topic of the evening. This careful presentation was so clearly outlined that a few brief statements will serve to summarize its contents. Dr. Lussy found the most insidious unionism in the tendency to have those not united in the faith cooperate in the work of the church. The Bible tells us: 1) What we are to teach in spreading the Gospel; 2) with whom we are to be united in spreading the Gospel; 3) whom we are to avoid in spreading the Gospel.

The last paper of the evening was presented by Pastor A. T. Kretzmann on the subject: "Practical Proposals to the Laymen for God-pleasing Action in 1950." Also this paper lends itself readily to summarization in a brief outline. We do not want the characteristics of a unionistic fellowship to become permanent in our Synod, and it thus to become a persistently unionistic fellowship. To forestall this there are six things

for us to do: 1) Become as fully informed as possible; 2) Discuss these matters in our congregations; 3) Have congregation memorialize Synod; 4) Attend the Synodical sessions in Milwaukee if you can; 5) Work that is being done needs financial support; 6) Hold larger meetings for coming together of laymen. Let us pray unto the Lord that He give us strength and support in the work we are doing! W. H. M.

DO YOU KNOW . . . ?

Do you know all the facts concerning the doctrinal controversy caused by issues raised by *A Statement*? Are you acquainted with all the facts of the meetings of the "Ten and Ten"? Do you know of the events preceding the "*Agreement*" between Praesidium and leading signers among the "44"? Have you a documented list of the false teachings propagated within Synod since the publication of *A Statement*? Do you possess the documentary proof that the unscriptural teachings of *A Statement* are now being practiced within Synod?

These and many other facts, carefully documented, are offered to you in a 23-page mimeographed release by the Chicago Study Club. This paper, sometimes referred to as the "White Paper," may now be had for your private use, or as a basis for discussion before congregations, church societies, and the mass-meetings now being inaugurated in various sections of Synod. The cost is 35 cents postpaid. Order from Rev. H. David Mensing, 159th and Oak Park Avenue, Tinley Park, Illinois.

❶ An Evaluation of German Theology During the Last Decade

A recent publication in Germany, *Handbuch der Evangelisch-Theologischen Arbeit 1938-1948*, by Dr. Hans-Werner Bartsch (Evangelisches Verlagswerk G. m. b. H. Stuttgart, 1949), offers a summary view of the status of scientific work in the sphere of evangelical theology in Germany during the specified decade, a few books in the French, English, and Scandinavian languages also being taken into consideration. The book is written from the standpoint of modern scientific theology, which rejects not only the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures, but also Scripture itself as the *only* source of theological knowledge. At the very beginning the author quotes and endorses the *Declaration of the Confessing Church* at Barmen of 1934: "Jesus Christ as He is testified to us in the Holy Scriptures is the one Word

of God that we hear, trust, and obey in life and death. — We reject the false doctrine as though the Church could and must beside this one Word of God acknowledge other events and powers, forms, and truths as God's revelation."

Bartsch informs us that with this antithesis not only the misuse of natural theology as practiced by the "German Christians" under the Hitler regime, but also all other sources of theology beside Christ as the only Word of God, are rejected. Christ *Himself*, as we find Him in the Scriptures, is in these words declared to be the only revelation of God to us. This might be understood, and has been understood, as though the Scriptures themselves were included as the source of theological knowledge. But this, says Bartsch, is a misinterpretation of the *Barmen Declaration*. *All other sources*, including the Bible itself, as the revelation of God, are to be excluded. Time and again he asserts that the old method of simply taking the truth from the Bible as the inspired Word is once and for all out of the question as an antiquated method not worthy of any serious consideration. The statement that Jesus alone is the Word of God to us is meant to say that God deals with us only through the historic Christ whom we find in those writings which are generally known as the Holy Scriptures. The idea is that theology has nothing to do with anything which cannot stand the test of scientific research, such as miracles, and everything that is supernatural, "mythical," etc. Such things are only apt to raise doubts in the heart. But leaving out of the question all material of this nature which is also found in the Bible, the fact remains that Jesus stood in an extraordinary relation to God, that He saw in God His Father, and that He was firmly convinced that He was sent into this world to perform a certain task, to establish a kingdom which would endure forever, and this firm conviction of His remained unshaken even in the face of death. So much can be gathered with certainty from these ancient documents, no matter who their authors were. It is furthermore acknowledged as an undeniable fact that the disciples were so deeply impressed by what they saw in Christ and heard from Him that they were ready to carry on His work even after His death and that they were ready to die for His cause.

It is therefore the task of theological science to study this problem: What was it that made such an indelible impression on the disciples? This question, we are told, cannot simply be answered by pointing to Christ's deity and His resurrection. For these are "mythical" remnants of an antiquated, uncritical theology, and can never be scientifically established as facts. Brushing aside the resurrection of Christ as an unscientific solution, Bartsch writes, on p. 73:

"The anchoring (*Verankerung*) in history, however, is to be sought in the event which lies hidden behind the Easter faith of the Apostles and which defies ascertainment through historical science." In other words, behind the Easter faith of the Apostles there must lie something which would explain their boldness after Easter if we could only establish scientifically what it was!

Now, Bartsch, as a representative of the liberal wing of scientific theology, very decidedly asserts that *the problem can never be satisfactorily solved*. It just has to be acknowledged as a problem. He has no patience with those theologians who believe they can give a satisfactory answer to the question just mentioned, least of all with those who simply point to Christ's deity, to His resurrection as testified in Scripture, and to the miracle of Pentecost. Dr. Sasse and Pfarrer Hopf are referred to on page 40 as representatives of this "antiquated" theology and disposed of by just a few words. Very decidedly Bartsch declares: "Nothing will be left us but to capitulate before the fact that we are historically unable to take hold of anything behind the Easter faith of the disciples, that historically it remains inexplicable," p. 62.

Just the same, Bartsch himself and other liberal theologians occasionally speak of Christ's resurrection, His ascension, etc. This fact Bartsch explains by shamelessly declaring: "In practice every preacher today does the same thing when he, for instance, speaks of the ascension to heaven although he knows that the idea of 'heaven' as well as that of hell belongs to a world of conception that is past for us. He speaks of it nevertheless simply because we have no better term for the preaching (*kecrygma*) which is given to us in the New Testament report of the ascension," p. 63. This reveals an almost incredible degree of dishonesty and hypocrisy. But at this point the folly of this type of theology also becomes evident. It is admitted by everyone that as soon as Christ's deity, His resurrection, and the Pentecost miracle are taken into account there is no problem at all. These three facts, and they alone, satisfactorily explain the undeniable and astounding change which took place in the attitude of the disciples. It is furthermore evident to everyone whose mind is not distorted that without Christ's resurrection the whole of Christian faith would be empty and absolutely worthless, as St. Paul powerfully testifies in I Cor. 15, 12-20. But in spite of all "infallible proofs" of Christ's resurrection, in spite of the fact that without it the Christian religion would collapse, these theologians insist on rejecting Christ's resurrection merely because in their opinion there is no "scientific" proof for it. They are ready to swallow

an altogether uncalled-for and inexplicable problem and to preach a Christianity which has no real comfort against sin and death here on earth and no certain hope of eternity. For the idea of modernistic theology, that in the historic Christ God has revealed to us the fact that He is Love in the sense that He is only a loving Father who is not angry over the sins of men, cannot set at peace a troubled conscience which is terrified by the divine Law. When once the Holy Ghost has opened the eyes of a sinner so that he sees himself in the true light and feels the wrath of God against sin in his heart nothing can quiet and console his conscience but the blood of Christ which was shed for us.

And this modernistic liberal theology is still very much alive in Germany and other countries of Europe (as well as in our own country). Bartsch did not write his book of his own accord, but on request of Dr. Guenther Siegel, the editor of the "Schriftendienst," who, SENSING THE DEMAND FOR SUCH A BOOK, saw in Dr. Bartsch just the right man to write it. The fact that such a book was wanted in the church of Germany shows that those are wrong who think and try to make us think that liberal theology is dead and done for. For this book reflects the kind of theology which is still being taught in the universities of Germany. Bartsch's survey includes more than two hundred authors of the period from 1938-1948. The tragedy is that the great majority of Lutherans by sharing the idea of theology as a science in the common sense of the word put themselves at a disadvantage in their testimony against liberalism. Their position is so inconsistent that they have only themselves to blame if their testimony lacks power and efficacy over against the unbelief of our day. There is no other way of arriving at the full truth which has been revealed to us than to accept the whole Bible as the inspired and errorless Word of God. Any yielding to modern theology in the least point is but the first step on a downward path, a path that eventually leads to total loss of the revealed truth.

Lutheran theologians who are contaminated with the idea of "scientific theology" and a so-called "Christocentric" attitude toward the Scriptures really belong to the camp of those who have left the sure foundation of Christian faith, whether they are conscious of this or not. And all dealings with them on a basis of "give-and-take," (*Begegnung*), as though "we might learn from them just as they might learn from us," as has been done at Bad Boll, is dealing with them on a wrong basis. Testifying to them that we differ from them and that we for our part firmly adhere to the plenary inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures is not enough. They

must be shown that their error destroys the foundation of Christian faith and is a source of other errors.

Would to God that all who in our time and in our synod are to any degree influenced by "science falsely so called" would sober up and have their eyes opened to the danger that lurks in any deference to false theories of modern science!

J. B.

❁ "For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you," Luke 17:21

Prof. E. W. A. Koehler, D. D.

Recently we came across the following statement: "To prove the Church to be invisible on the basis of Luke 17:20, 21 is, in my opinion, an unwarranted use of this text. First, because 'entos' undoubtedly means 'in your midst,' 'among you,' and, secondly, because the Savior is speaking of His rule in the hearts of men." The author undoubtedly means "in the hearts of His believers."

We have always believed, and we still believe, that this text does indeed prove that the Church is invisible. But we are somewhat mystified by the reasons given why this should be an unwarranted use of this text. The first reason is that "entos" means "in your midst, among you," and therefore it does not mean "within you." And the second reason is that Christ is here speaking of His "rule in the hearts of men." We wonder whether the author was aware of the fact that his second reason contradicts the first. For if the kingdom is the rule of Christ *in the hearts* of His believers, then the kingdom is certainly "within" them. But let us examine the text.

Luke 17:20, 21: "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (so that it can be observed or seen); "neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you."

Let us look at the preposition "*within*." The Greek text has the words "entos hymon." Liddle and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, give this definition for "entos": *within, inside*; Latin: *intus*; opposed to "*extos*." And the meaning "among" is not given at all. — The word "entos" occurs only twice in the New Testament, the other place is Matt. 23:26: "to entos tou poteriou," that which is inside the cup. Here the word clearly means "within" and not "among." — Young's *Concordance* under the heading of "among" gives no text where "entos" is used in this sense. — We shall further see that the king-

dom of God is in the hearts of the people, and therefore it must be "within" them. In conformity with this established usage the fathers, and some of them also knew some Greek, have translated "entos" with "within," Luther: "inwendig in euch." Why, then, are we being told that it must be "among" and not "within"?

You. The reason advanced that "entos" cannot mean "within," but must be taken in the sense of "among," is this: Christ was speaking to a group of Pharisees, not one of whom believed in Him, and therefore could not have the kingdom of God in his heart. Or one might think that, using the plural, "hymon," you, Christ had in mind the Pharisees as a *group*, and wished to say that the kingdom of God was within this group, and that would be equivalent to "among" the members of this group. What shall we say? Christ certainly did not mean to say that each one of the men He spoke to actually had the kingdom of God in his heart, nor did He mean that the kingdom of God was within their group or among the Pharisees. They had asked Him, when the kingdom of God should come. In His answer Christ explains to them the nature of this kingdom, and thereby also answers their question. Jesus means to say: 'Your question shows that you are waiting for the kingdom of God, and you are looking for some outward display whereby its coming may be recognized. You expect it to be like the kingdoms of this world, where men are ruled by external laws and ordinances, and where there is an external show of authority and power. But I tell you that the kingdom of God is of an entirely different nature. The kings of this world rule their subjects from without, enforcing obedience to their laws by external means; but God rules His believers from within, sending His Spirit into their hearts so that joyfully and willingly they obey His commandments. Therefore the kingdom of God does not operate on you from without, but it operates from within you, and for this reason you cannot see it and point it out, and you will know of it when you have it in your hearts. The answer to your question, therefore, is, the kingdom of God comes to you the very moment that God rules in your hearts.' Therefore the word "you," meaning the Pharisees, does not force us to take "entos" in the sense of "among." That becomes especially clear as we consider the following.

For. "Gar" is a conjunction which introduces the *reason* for the previous statement. Christ had said that the kingdom of God does not come with observation; no one can say, Lo, here it is, or, lo, there it is. It cannot be seen, observed, and pointed out. Why? "For, because, the kingdom of God is within you." Now, what sense does

it make to have Christ say, You cannot see the kingdom of God, *for it is among you?* If this were the meaning of the text, then it should be possible to discover its presence by observation, and to say, Lo, here it is, or, lo, there it is. But Christ definitely says that the kingdom of God does not come with observation, and that one cannot point out that it is here or there, and then He adds the reason why this cannot be done, "for the kingdom of God is within you." The text makes sense only if we retain the original meaning of "entos," namely, "within."

The Kingdom of God. What is a kingdom? We speak of a country as being a kingdom. Yet no country is in itself a kingdom, if it is not ruled by a king. We may, perhaps, call even a people a kingdom. Yet no people is in itself a kingdom, unless it is ruled by a king. The basic conception of "kingdom," therefore, is the actual rule exercised by a king. We grant that in the Bible the term "kingdom of God" is also used of the people whom God rules and governs by His Word and Spirit, but in our text it evidently refers to the function and exercise of the rule itself. Christ is speaking of the rule of God in the hearts of men. We read II Cor. 6, 18: "God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and will be their God, and they shall be my people." God dwells in the hearts of His believers, and He is active in them, ruling and guiding them, as Paul says Rom. 8, 14: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And in the Apology we read: "And this Church alone is called the body of Christ, which Christ renews, sanctifies, and governs by His Spirit," *Trig.*, p. 227. *This leading, governing, and ruling by the Spirit of God, that is the kingdom of God within us.* It is therefore evident that the term kingdom of God does not refer to the *persons that are in this kingdom*, but rather to the *rule and exercise of the kingly power of God* in the hearts of these persons; not the persons that are ruled and governed, but the rule and government itself is meant.

By the "Gospel of the kingdom," Mark 1:14, God would establish His rule in the hearts of men; by being born again they enter into this kingdom, John 3:3, and thus the rule of God in their hearts becomes an actuality. Luther correctly explains the *Second Petition* saying that the kingdom of God comes to us "When our heavenly Father gives us His holy Spirit so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead a godly life, here in time and hereafter in eternity." This is the kingdom of God of which Christ speaks in our text.

This "rule of God" must be distinguished from "the Church." The Church is made up of people, of persons whom "Christ renews, sanctifies, and

governs by His Spirit," it is the communion of saints, the "*coetus vere credentium*." Even as the renewing and sanctifying by the Spirit is not the Church, so also the rule and government by the Spirit cannot be identical with the Church. God *rules* His Church, and the Church *is being ruled* by God. Thus, when we say, The king rules his people, then we distinguish between the *subject*, the king, who does the ruling, and the *predicate*, the function or action of ruling, what the king actually does, and the *object*, or the people, whom he rules. So here. It is God who rules, and He must be distinguished from the "kingdom," which is the actual exercise of His kingly power, and both of these must be distinguished from the people whom He governs, which are the members of His Church. This distinction is clear also from our text. Christ says, "the kingdom of God is within you." As the water in a glass is not identical with the glass itself, even so the kingdom of God in the hearts of the believers cannot be identical with the believers themselves. It is true, whoever has the kingdom of God in his heart, is a member of the Church, yet the kingdom is not the Church. For this reason we may not substitute "Church" for "kingdom of God" in our text; nor may we do so in the Second Petition. On the other hand, we may not substitute "kingdom of God" for "church" in Eph. 1:22, where we are told that the church is the body of Christ, and in Eph. 5:25, where we learn that Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it.

We must also distinguish between "faith" and the "kingdom of God." Faith is not the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of God is not faith. It is true, God works faith in me through the Gospel, but God does not believe in me and for me. Faith is an act of man, whereby he apprehends and trusts in the merits of Christ, and thus it justifies him before God. But the function of the kingdom of God within us is quite different, it is not something we do, but rather it is the power and influence of God operating in the hearts of the believers, whereby He rules and governs them, it is the leading of the Spirit of God, Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:16-18, and its aim is not to apprehend the merits of Christ, but to preserve and strengthen our faith and to sanctify us in our lives through this faith. It must therefore be evident that "faith" and "kingdom of God within us" cannot be identical. For this reason we may not simply substitute "faith" for "kingdom of God" in our text or in John 3:5. "To be born again" means "to come to faith," to be converted, and by such faith one enters the kingdom of God, *i. e.*, God now rules and governs him. It would make no sense to say, one must come

to faith in order to come to faith. Neither may we substitute "kingdom of God" for "faith" in Matt. 14:31; 15:28; Rom. 3:28. By faith we become members of the "*coetus vere credentium*," and by that faith the kingdom of God is at once established in us, namely the rule and government of God in our hearts.

Therefore neither faith nor the kingdom of God is the Church. The Church is the *people* who have faith in God and are governed by God.

But while we distinguish "faith" and "kingdom of God," we *may not separate them*. Where the one is, the other is bound to be. The rule of God in the heart is the immediate result of faith. God does not rule in the hearts of unbelievers; but as soon as a person comes to faith, he is at once ruled by the Spirit of God. Where there is no faith, there can be no kingdom of God in the heart, and where the kingdom of God is, there must needs be faith. The very moment a person by faith becomes a disciple of Christ, he submits to the rule of Christ, his King, and Christ continues to rule and lead him by His Spirit, as long as he remains in the faith. While we distinguish between the faith I have in God and the rule God exercises over me, the two are so intimately joined that the one cannot be without the other.

But as little as we can separate a person's faith in Christ from God's kingdom in the heart of this person, may we separate either one of the two or both of them from the Church. Because *the very persons who so believe in God, and whom God so rules by His Spirit constitute the membership of the Church*. Faith is not the Church, but the person who has faith belongs to the Church. The kingdom of God is not the Church, but the person who has this kingdom in his heart belongs to the Church. Thus, if a man has true faith, then God also rules in his heart, and he is a member of the Church. If God rules in his heart, then he must have faith and be a member of the Church. If a man is in truth a member of the *Una Sancta*, then he must have faith and the kingdom of God within him. The relation between "faith," "kingdom of God," and membership in the "church" is so close and intimate that if one ceases, the others cease likewise. If, then, our text tells us that the kingdom of God is within us, then that means that also faith is in our hearts, and that we are members of the Church.

Now, persons can indeed be seen. Yet what makes them members of the Church is invisible to human observation. Faith is a matter of *the heart*, as Paul writes: "With the heart man believes unto righteousness," Rom. 10:10. We hear the confession a man makes with his mouth, but whether this is a true expression of the faith

in his heart, we do not know. Faith itself remains invisible. Likewise the kingdom of God is *within us*, and whenever God rules in the heart, it will show itself outwardly in the conduct of the person. Yet we are told that there are those who have "the form of godliness," but deny the power thereof, 2 Tim. 3:5; that there are tares among the wheat, children of the wicked one among the children of the kingdom, Matt. 13:38, and that we cannot distinguish the one from the other and, therefore, cannot separate them, Matt. 13:28, 30. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." And Christ will say unto them, "I never knew you," Matt. 7, 21-23. To human eyes all these people seem to be members of the Church, and still they are not. Why can we not know that such people are not members of the *Una Sancta*? Because we can judge only outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart, 1 Sam. 16:7. We cannot look into a person's heart and see whether he has true faith in the Savior and is ruled by the Spirit of God. It is possible that men will say, Lord, Lord, and have the form of godliness, yet, neither faith nor the kingdom of God is within them.

Therefore we can never say for a certainty, This man has faith, or, This man is ruled by the Spirit of God, or, This man is in truth a member of the One Holy Christian Church. On the basis of the Bible we believe that there are such men, but we cannot point them out with absolute certainty. Therefore we do not say in the Creed, I *see* the Church, but I believe that there is a Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints. We also know from the Bible what is the nature of the unity that binds all true Christians together into one body, namely, faith in Christ and the rule of God in their hearts, but we cannot point out the individuals that are so united. While, therefore, we know that God has His Church here on earth, and also know what makes men members of this Church, we do not know to a man who these members are. God's Church is invisible.

The Bible does not use the terms 'Invisible Church' and 'Visible Church,' yet it teaches what these terms stand for. They are convenient and helpful in distinguishing between those who *HAVE* true faith and the kingdom of God in their hearts, and thus constitute the Invisible Church, and those who *PROFESS* the faith and appear to be ruled by God, and thus constitute the Visible Church. As all true members of the Church will also profess their faith, the Invisible Church is hid within the Visible Church.

Our text does not say in so many words that the *Una Sancta* is invisible, but it does tell us that

the kingdom of God is within its members. And as Christ rules by His Spirit all those and only those whom by the same Spirit He renews and sanctifies, it follows that these and these alone constitute the spiritual body of Christ, which is called the Church. As the things that make men members of the Church, namely faith and the kingdom within, are invisible, it follows that the Church itself is invisible. And as our text mentions one of these invisible things, which are essential to membership in the Church, this text indeed proves the invisibility of the Church.

ON THE UNION FRONT

A Beginning of All-Lutheran Cooperation in Adult Education

A correspondent sends a four page mimeographed questionnaire entitled "Survey on Practices and Policies for Adult Instruction for Lutheran Church Membership," the introduction of which reads: "The aim of this survey is to ascertain general and prevailing practices in regard to instructing adults for membership in the Lutheran Church. These opinions of several hundred Lutheran pastors are to be compiled in the hope that the results may be helpful in suggesting standards, methods, and materials for enriching and strengthening this program within the several Lutheran bodies in America."

A letter urging early reply, which accompanied the survey, dated April 2, 1949, was submitted "on behalf of the Intersynodical Committee," "representing six synodical groups," the name of the Missouri Synod's Secretary of Adult Education being affixed with those of the five other representatives. Replies were to have been sent to Dr. Lindberg of the Augustana Seminary at Rock Island, Illinois. Clipped to the accompanying letters sent to Missouri Synod men was the following note:

"Dear Brother,

"You are one of 300 pastors in our synod chosen to help us get a *bona fide* opinion from our ministerium on the instruction of adults for membership in the Lutheran Church. It is hoped that the results of this survey will help lift the standard and make more effective the instruction. We suggest that you cooperate and send your filled out questionnaire directly to Dr. Lindberg. The findings should be of great service also to our synod.

The Board for Parish Education,
O. E. FEUCHT, *Secretary of Adult Education.*"

Capitulation

Speaking of the joint meeting of the committees of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, on December 5 and 6, 1949, at which the "common confession" was approved, the *Lutheran Standard* (December 24, 1949, p. 13) says: "The two joint sessions were opened with prayer."

This means that, for the first time since the creation of the present Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Missouri Synod, said committee has practiced religious fellowship with those who teach and support false doctrine and practice, before agreement between the two church bodies has been achieved.

This is the logic of the situation: First we *practice fellowship* by praying together; then we hold a meeting to reach doctrinal agreement so that we can *enter into fellowship*. First let us do something, and then let us consult whether or not it ought to be done.

The Missouri Synod rightly says of such things, in its re-affirmed prayer-fellowship resolutions, that "it be understood that no pulpit, altar, and prayer fellowship has been established between us and the American Lutheran Church; and until such fellowship has been officially declared by the synods concerned, no action is to be taken by any of our pastors or congregations which ignore the fact that we are not yet united." (*Proc.*, 1947, p. 517.)

Appeal is sometimes made to a supposed difference between joint prayer and prayer fellowship, the former being supposedly permissible, the latter not. At the risk of repeating to the point of weariness, may we remind our readers that no clear definition of this supposed difference has ever been presented. Nor has any Word of Scripture ever been adduced to prove it.

It is unfortunate that the 1947 Convention did not give answer to the reasonable request of the Chicago Heights Congregation (*Proc.*, p. 516), but instead, relegated the prayer fellowship subject to the limbo of questions for "further study" under the "direction of the Praesidium." (*Proc.*, p. 518.)

Weakening?

A letter from a San Antonio, Texas, pastor, not of the Missouri Synod, is to be found in the *Lutheran Outlook* of October, 1949, p. 311. The writer notes: "The Missouri Synod Lutheran pastors in the San Antonio area have absolutely and consistently refused to open former free conferences with joint prayer, in spite of our earnest pleading with them to do so."

He then proceeds to show that he is apprised of the dissension on the subject of prayer fellow-

ship in the Missouri Synod, by quoting from the *American Lutheran*, whose Missouri Synod editors are still supporting the free joint prayer paragraph of the "Statement" of the 44.

Further, he proceeds to quote from a letter which he received from an unidentified Missouri Synod pastor, "dated in St. Louis, Missouri, July 12, 1949." In this letter he was advised, among other things: "Hold firmly to your position not to attend free conferences that are not opened with prayer. Better days will come."

With repeating frequency the editors of periodicals within the American Lutheran Conference are writing that these developments within the Missouri Synod are "heartening" to them. A divided Missouri is easier to handle.

There can be little doubt that the Missouri Synod's troubles are largely of her own making.

Try the Spirits

Some months ago the *Valley Lutheran* of Horace, North Dakota, made its appearance. In Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 10, we read: "From the far and wide comes the call for one Lutheran Church in America. Leaders and lay people are almost as one in the wish. Reports special to the *Valley Lutheran* from leaders in the Lutheran Church read as follows:

"Your pleasant lines of November 10 interested me greatly. I wonder what I said in 1934 about the prospects of Lutheran Union; there is no doubt in my mind that we are traveling in that direction, with the Holy Spirit as our guide." Theodore Graebner, Chair of Philosophy and Dogmatics Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri."

Is it the Holy Spirit, or another spirit?

Revival of Saliger's Error

Editor J. A. Dell of the *Lutheran Outlook* (A. L. Conference), in the August, 1949, issue, p. 228, takes Chaplain Arthur Carl Piepkorn (Missouri Synod) to task. In the June issue of the *American Lutheran* the latter had written: "... the early (and most dependable) doctors of the Church of the Augsburg Confession for the most part wisely refuse to define the precise moment when the *sacramental miracle* takes place. They hold unreservedly, however, that the recitation of the Words of Institution is the consecration, and that the *Real Presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament is achieved prior to the distribution.*" (Italics by editor of *Lutheran Outlook*.)

The Editor is justly wrought over all this. He sees in it "some form of trans-substantiation or consubstantiation." Certainly it is the error of Saliger revived, viz., "that in virtue of the consecration before the use (*ante usum*) bread

and wine are the body and blood of Christ." *Concordia Trigl.*, Intr., p. 179. Cf. also Pieper *Dogmatik*, III, 434; Walther, *Pastorale* (Edition of 1872), pp. 168-175.

A. V. K.

Review of Publications

The Statement of Controversy up to Date

A Frank and Simple Presentation of the Facts. By Wallace H. McLaughlin and H. D. Mensing. 8 pages. Price: 10 cents. Quantity price \$1.00 per dozen. Order from Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau Tract Department, Box 4, Elizabeth, Illinois.

This is a reprint, in tract form, of an article which appeared in the November, 1949, *Confessional Lutheran*, and for which we are anticipating a wide demand. Written in simple language and presenting the salient facts in the State-mentarian Controversy up to date (1949), the tract will lend itself well for mass distribution among our laity. With this tract in hand, they will know what this deplorable controversy, incited by the "44," is really all about.

We suggest that a suitable quantity for general distribution be ordered at once now that the handy tract is available.

P. H. B.

The Missouri Synod Layman and Lutheran Union.

Second Edition. (Revised.) 1950. Herbert O. Lussy, M. D. 36 pages, 3½x5½. 10 cents per copy. Order from Dr. H. C. Lussy, Evanston, Illinois.

The fact that the first edition of this tract went through three printings shows its popularity. It is justly in demand. The second (revised) edition, 1950, just off the press, has been somewhat augmented by the addition of material taken into consideration the action of the Missouri Synod with regard to matters pertinent to Lutheran union taken at its centennial convention in 1947.

Written by a layman for laymen, this tract excellently fills the bill for which it is intended. The price is unusually low. Order it in quantities!

P. H. B.

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD

Rev. M. J. Naumann
926 N. 2nd St.
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Permit No. 7



PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF LUTHERAN UNITY

MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

APRIL, 1950

NUMBER 4

IN THIS ISSUE: Editorial — The Latest Union Document — What is the Truth? — On the Union Front — Review of Publications — What Our Readers Say

● Editorial

A neat little trick — and really not so little either — was played on the Missouri Synod by its Department of Public Relations (which is in the hands of one or the other of the "44" and which is to consume \$37,000 of the monies contributed by us for church work this year) by its propagandistic news release of January 28 concerning Lutheran union. As though it was not bad enough that at that time pastors and congregations of our synod had not yet been permitted to see the latest document proposed as a basis for doctrinal fellowship between the American Lutheran Church and Missouri, which is to be acted upon at the latter's convention, less than five months off, agents of the Department

of Public Relations, and the public press were given the misinformation: "AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH AND LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD REACH AGREEMENT."

Concerning the document of our committee on doctrinal unity itself we shall have something to say elsewhere. But what shall one say about the untimely propaganda of the Department of Public Relations, which has caused such widespread confusion? (And we may add that the Department of Public Relations news release concerning the question of membership on the part of Missouri in the National Lutheran Council was equally propagandistic.)

Is it not the highest time that loyal Missourians everywhere rise up as one man against

THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN

Published in the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism
By the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau
(One Dollar Per Year)

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Articles intended for publication are to be addressed to the office of publication: Box 73, Clinton, Iowa.

Subscriptions (\$1.00 per year) are to be sent to Rev. Eldor Mueller, 910 Second Avenue, Sterling, Illinois. Please notify us promptly of any change of address.

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TRACT DEPARTMENT: Box 4, Elizabeth, Illinois.

such misrepresentations of life-and-death situations confronting us? Or can anyone who still has any Missouri blood in his veins and who has any regard for truth at all remain indifferent and neutral in such a time of crisis?

Let us remember the words of Dante: "The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in a period of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality."

P. H. B.

We are being told that the more "conservative" element in the American Lutheran Church (whatever that may mean) now fears that it will be driven into organic union with the United Lutheran Church through its membership in the National Lutheran Council. Such

a fear is well grounded. Organic union is the dead end of the road which the American Lutheran Church and other bodies within the NLC have been traveling together these years.

It has generally been recognized as a fact that only the Synodical Conference has stood for true unity on the basis of agreement in all matters of doctrine and practice in past years. The American Lutheran Conference, of which the American Lutheran Church is a member, has stood for pulpit and altar fellowship without complete doctrinal agreement, but not for organic union. The United Lutheran Church, with which the American Lutheran Conference is affiliated in the National Lutheran Council, has always stood for nothing less than organic union despite doctrinal disagreement. In an un-Scriptural union of churches the most liberal element will always win out, as history has invariably shown, and as sure as it is true (as Scripture says it is) that a little leaven will leaven the whole lump. Now the National Lutheran Council, which is supposed to have been an "agency" for joint church work is about to recognize the fact that it is a church federation, with a view to organic union. To quote the *Lutheran Witness* (February 7, 1950, p. 44, summarizing a *Lutheran Standard* report, December 31, 1949, p. 4, which we would much prefer having the reader consult): "There is now a definite plan which seems likely to materialize for federating the ALC with the other seven church bodies in the NLC. The 1950 conventions of these bodies are also to express themselves on their willingness to work toward an organic merger of these bodies." Proposals, according to the *Lutheran Standard* include again amending the constitution of the NLC toward the realization of the desired ends.

And now, to repeat the more "conservative" element in the American Lutheran Church is supposed to be scared. Obviously, in such a case, the way out of its difficulty is to leave the *National Lutheran Council*, which is dragging it on to disaster at a rapid pace.

But this way out is not being chosen. Instead, we, the Missouri Synod, are being asked to unite with the American Lutheran Church, and thus to "help" it. This explanation of affairs which confront us has been offered by a member of our committee on unity as weighing very heavily in its decision to try to induce us to accept the Report which it is offering for consideration at our forthcoming convention. We are also being told that there is no extending of one hand to the right and one to the left by the American Lutheran Church this time. This is obviously not true, as is shown by the ALC's dickering right now toward declaring itself federated with the NLC toward eventual organic union.

The American Lutheran Church still, nay, we should rather say, more than ever, has its liberal group, outspoken modernists, as well as more "conservative" elements, not to mention a third and most decisive factor of a middle-of-the-road group which has always gone whithersoever it has been led. And liberalism is in the saddle, leading the way in the ALC.

The way to help such a church is not by uniting in fellowship with it on the basis of an agreement which ignores existing doctrinal and practical differences of the most far-reaching consequence. These must rather be faced. If the American Lutheran Church cannot rid itself of its liberalism and its unionistic association with other bodies, the only honorable and proper way for any better element within it would be to leave the American Lutheran Church and to accept our help by joining us.

In any other event, assuming that Missouri is still a salt, it would become lost in the same unsavory soup in which the American Lutheran Church is being dissolved, — the unionistic ism of the National Lutheran Council.

One thing more remains to be said. If it be objected that we, too, have our liberals — and we have been told by no one less than one of our committee members that this objection is being raised by members of the ALC committee — then let the answer to that objection be a cleaning of our own house. And let us above all not overlook our own committee in doing so!

This is the real issue that confronts us now.
P. H. B.

What "United Lutherans" think about the Bible has been shown again in their church paper, called the *Lutheran*, in an article written by its editor (Dr. G. Elson Ruff) in connection with the death of Dr. Walter A. Maier, Lutheran Hour preacher. While admitting that it is probable that more people had listened to Dr. Maier than to any other preacher who ever lived, the ULC *Lutheran* goes on to say that the trouble is that the well-educated won't listen to a man like Dr. Maier. Its reason for saying this is given in the following words: "He upheld the teaching of the Missouri Synod, of which he was a member, that the Scriptures 'contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters'." The words which the ULC *Lutheran* put in quotations (without giving their source) are from the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod*. Yes, this position, upheld by Dr. Maier, is the doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod. And this position is rejected by

the ULC *Lutheran* in the following words: "That's not only not Lutheran but it's hopelessly bad sense."

The position rejected by the ULC *Lutheran* not only represents the Missouri Synod. It represents the teaching of the Lutheran Church itself, which confesses in her Christian Book of Concord: "We receive and embrace with our whole heart the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the *pure*, clear fountain of Israel, which is the only true standard by which all teachers and doctrines are to be judged." (Trigl. Edit., p. 851.)

Those who contend, as it is being contended in the ULC *Lutheran*, that the Bible is not the pure fountain of Israel, but that it contains errors and contradictions, really don't accept what the Lutheran Church confesses as her faith, even though they may protest a thousand times over that they do.

To such Lutherans we rightly apply the earnest admonition of Scripture, Romans 16, 17: "*Avoid them!*"

P. H. B.

The Report on the National Lutheran Council. — The Missouri Synod's committee, appointed to study the question of joining the National Lutheran Council, as urged by liberals in our midst, has now published its report. What do we find there?

First, let us say that both the committee report and the views of a minority, Mr. W. C. Dickmeyer, which are also presented, completely ignore the matter of cost. They have forgotten what the *Lutheran Witness* said in 1921, when, speaking of the National Lutheran Council, it called such an inter-church bureaucracy "the most expensive luxury the Christian Church has had since the year One."

But there are far more important considerations involved in this matter.

The committee report (majority) makes a false distinction between "prayer fellowship" and "joint prayer," which the minority (Mr. Dickmeyer) in the presentation of its own views rightly brands as "unreal and untenable." And we may add: *without foundation in Scripture*. Insistence on such a distinction is based on a false interpretation of the Saginaw Resolutions of the Missouri Synod (1944). The Saginaw convention did not sanction joining in prayer at any and every intersynodical meeting. It merely granted a possible exception to its dictum that prayer fellowship had not yet been established with the American Lutheran Church. That exception was that at intersynodical conferences, held for the purpose of deliberating and discussing the Word of God, prayer fellowship, or joining in prayer,

would be permissible under certain circumstances. The committee clearly had in mind, as various members of it have also expressly stated, cases of casuistry, where there may be those who are in a "state of confession" (*status confessionis*), such as true Lutheranism has always rightly operated with. (Cp., e. g., Art. X of the Formula of Concord.) No one who still respects the Eighth Commandment should put anything but this best construction on this matter.

The Committee Report (majority) states that the Constitution of the NLC "as it reads contains nothing which would make it sinful for the Missouri Synod to sign."

But what does God's Word say on this matter? If it is true that vital differences in doctrine exist, then it would be contrary to God's Word and the confession of our synod to join the NLC. The committee report says that "vital differences of doctrine do exist" (the minority in the presentation of its own views does not so much as attempt to deny this), and it admits that the NLC "is actually functioning as a church."

Our Brief Statement says: "All Christians are required by God to have church fellowship only with orthodox church bodies." Our Catechism teaches us to "avoid all false churches." And it is still true, what the *Lutheran Witness* said in 1925: "To beware and avoid does not mean to pray with them."

The minority in the presentation of its views speaks of "building the kingdom of God and the saving of immortal souls." Do we have to join forces with those who deny the clear Word of God in order to do effective mission work, — or does the Great Commission of the Lord of the Church and of its real mission still read: "... teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"? (Mt. 28, 19-20.)

D.

❷ The Latest Union Document

In the course of the last four decades a number of documents have been drawn up for the purpose of establishing church fellowship between the Missouri Synod and its opponents, especially the former Ohio and Iowa Synods, which, with the little Buffalo Synod, are now merged in the American Lutheran Church.

The first document of this kind was the so-called *St. Paul Theses*, an unofficial statement which has now been almost forgotten. These theses attempted to settle the differences in the doctrines of Conversion and Election. But they did not settle anything, because they merely set forth truths on which the two sides were agreed, while the real differences as they existed at that time were, probably inadvertently, ignored.

Then came the *Chicago Theses*, which were composed by official representatives of the Ohio, Iowa, Buffalo, and Missouri Synods. After years of deliberation, the authors of these theses thought they had found a basis on which fellowship could be established between these synods. The theses were carefully weighed at the Convention of the Missouri Synod at River Forest in 1929 and found wanting, because they evidently made room for contradictory teachings. In their place the *Brief Statement* was prepared by a committee of the Missouri Synod, and this document was unanimously accepted as a clear presentation of its doctrinal position and as a basis for further deliberations with other Lutheran synods.

The next step was taken after the merger of the Ohio, Iowa, and Buffalo Synods into the American Lutheran Church, which took place in 1930. This time, not *one* single document was presented; but, instead, the jubilee Synod at St. Louis in 1938 had to deal with three documents. First, there was the *Declaration* of the American Lutheran Church, which set forth its own particular position. The peculiar tenets of this church body are not openly confessed in this document, but they are distinctly recognizable in it by everyone who knows them at all. The second document was the report of the Intersynodical Committee of the Missouri Synod, which recommended establishment of fraternal relations with the American Lutheran Church on the basis of the agreement which had so far been achieved. The committee held that the differences which remained needed no longer to be regarded as divisive. The third document was the report of the floor committee, which in principle seconded the report of the Intersynodical committee, but at the same time recommended further attempts at reaching agreement also in the differences which still remained. These three documents were adopted at St. Louis. But this rather involved and unsettled basis in the long run proved so unsatisfactory that it was later dropped. The demand for one document instead of three became more and more pronounced.

Hence a single document was prepared by representatives of the Missouri Synod and of the American Lutheran Church, which, however, was short-lived, because it satisfied neither the American Lutheran Church nor conservative members of the Missouri Synod. The American Lutheran Church reaffirmed its irrevocable readiness to enter into fraternal relations with Missouri *only* on the basis of the A. L. C. Declaration, namely, — acceptance of remaining differences on the part of Missouri as *non-divisive*.

It was now clear to all soberly thinking Lutherans that agreement between Missouri and the A. L. C. in all doctrines was definitely out of the

question. But in spite of this, unionists within the Missouri Synod were undaunted in their endeavors. In spite of the very outspoken renunciation of the spokesmen of the A. L. C., they prevailed on the convention of the Missouri Synod at Milwaukee in 1947 to venture another attempt at union. Committees were appointed anew by both sides, and the results of renewed negotiations now lie before us in the *Common Confession of Faith* of the two committees. The all-important question for us now is this: Are the doctrinal differences which have kept these two church bodies apart up till now really settled in this latest document, or are they merely covered up or ignored as in former documents? Both sides contributed to the new document. Its words were carefully weighed, and revised repeatedly, the final product being accepted by both sides during a joint session on December 5 and 6, 1949. Thus the document represents a well considered basis of the two committees on which their two church bodies may in their opinion establish fraternal relations.

Let us now see how these committees dealt with existing doctrinal differences.

1. The Holy Scriptures

The first weighty difference which was to be removed concerns the Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. This is a relatively new difference. There was a time when the Missouri, the Iowa, and the Ohio Synods, in spite of other differences, were in full agreement as to the Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. The Iowa Synod was the first among these three synods which began to waver and to yield to modernistic conceptions of the Bible. This is not surprising, since Iowa from its very beginning was and has remained to some extent under the influence of German modern theology. The first symptom, showing that all was no longer right in this respect within the Iowa Synod, appeared in an article which Dr. Reu wrote for the Iowan *Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, in August, 1926. In this article Dr. Reu pointed out the difference between those Lutherans who "assert that the Inerrancy of the Scriptures refers only to those things which pertain to the saving truth and who therefore from the start admit a possibility or even a probability that the Scriptures might err in other things" and those who "profess the absolute Inerrancy of the Scriptures in all things." A heated controversy ensued during the years 1926-1930, first within the Iowa Synod. A vote taken in 1930 revealed the alarming fact that already at that time a slight majority in that synod favored the modern conception. At that time Ohioans still declared "that whatever may or may not come of the cherished plans to unite our forces in organic

union with those of other bodies, the confession of faith of the resulting body must clearly state our position on the Inerrancy of God's Holy Word." (*Pastoral Monthly*, January, 1928.) But the Ohioans struggled in vain. The original draft of the constitution of the contemplated united church body indeed contained a paragraph which confessed the Inerrancy of the Scriptures in all things. But the liberal wing of the Iowa Synod succeeded in carrying through a change in this paragraph, of such a nature as to confess only the Inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures in matters pertaining to Christian faith and life, and leaving open the possibility or probability of errors in the Scriptures in other things. The Ohioans finally yielded and accepted the change. In the present American Lutheran Church even former Ohioans, together with former Iowans, boldly assert and defend the modern theory according to which errors are assumed in the Bible. Such are the sinister effects of unionism.

The A. L. C. *Declaration*, which lay before the convention of the Missouri Synod in 1938, contained an article on the Holy Scriptures which, superficially viewed, could be taken as a confession of the Verbal Inspiration and Inerrancy of the whole Bible. But when, at a mixed conference of Missourians and A. L. C. men, liberal members of the latter church body were asked how they could accept such a declaration, they pointed to certain features of this article of the A. L. C. *Declaration* and said that, *e. g.*, the expression that the Holy Ghost "supplied to the holy writers contents and the fitting word" did not mean to them that all words of the Scriptures were inspired, but that the writers of the Bible wrote as every other author writes a book or an article, each one in his own style and on the basis of various sources at hand; but occasionally, when it was necessary, the Holy Ghost supplied to them contents and the fitting word. They declared that they could never have accepted this statement if the plural "words" had been used instead of the singular "word," because that could only mean Verbal Inspiration, which they reject. This was an eye-opener to many. Another ambiguous passage in this paragraph of the A. L. C. *Declaration* was the statement that "the separate books of the Bible constitute an organic whole without contradiction and error, John 10, 35, and are rightly called the Word of God." This sounds good, as though the whole Bible were here declared to be the errorless Word of God. But modernists could, and actually did, accept even this statement in their own sense, referring the words "without contradiction and error" only to the so-called "organic whole" and in this sense they were also able to "call the Bible the Word of God." This is the characteristic of unionistic formulas, that

they do not frankly set forth doctrinal differences and settle them on the basis of Scripture, but hide them by choosing words which each side can accept in its own sense.

Now, turning to the *Common Confession of Faith* of the representatives of the Missouri Synod and of the American Lutheran Church, we see that the Holy Scriptures are not treated in a separate article as the foundation of the Christian faith, but only as a sub-division of Article V, which treats of the Means of Grace. But in Par. 2 of this article we again find the ominous phrase that "the Holy Spirit by divine Inspiration supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word," to which all modernists in the American Lutheran Church will say yea and Amen. Likewise they will also gladly "acknowledge the Holy Scriptures in their entirety" (the organic whole) "as the inspired Word of God," as the thesis says. Believers in plenary Inspiration, on the other hand, are supposed to see in the same statement a confession of the full and verbal Inspiration of the Scriptures from beginning to end. (In the third full paragraph of this Article V, the important connective "therefore" clearly refers back to what has just been said in paragraph 2. — P. H. B.)

Compare with this the clear, unambiguous words of the Brief Statement, that the Scriptures "are the Word of God because the holy men of God who wrote the Scriptures wrote only what the Holy Ghost communicated to them by inspiration, II Tim. 3, 13; II Pet. 1, 21," and the anti-thesis: "We reject the doctrine which under the name of science has gained wide popularity in the Church of our day, that the Holy Scripture is not in all its parts the Word of God, but in part the Word of God and in part the word of man and hence does, or at least might, contain error." This is the plain speech of those who really believe the whole Bible to be the inspired Word of God. Let the A. L. C. accept these words, and we declare the difference in the doctrine of Holy Scripture settled. Modernists will never accept such a clear confession, and we can never accept the ambiguous words of the latest union document regarding the Scriptures as a real agreement.

2. Conversion

The controversy on the doctrine of Conversion, unlike that of the Holy Scriptures, is an old one. In order to present this matter in such a way that also lay Christians may be able to judge the situation, it will be best to set forth the difference as it existed in the first period of the controversy and as it presented itself after our opponents changed their mode of teaching, a few decades ago. The difference at the beginning consisted in this, that the Missouri Synod con-

fessed (as it still does) that the conversion and salvation of fallen man depend entirely on God's saving grace, while the Iowa Synod, and later the Ohio Synod also, contended that conversion and salvation depend not on God's saving grace alone, but to a certain extent also on the conduct of natural man. Dr. Stellhorn, the chief spokesman of Ohio, stated and defended the thesis: "It is un-Christian and heathenish to say that the actual obtaining of salvation procured and meant by God for all men depends in no respect on the conduct of man over against the grace of God, but in every respect on God alone." (*Kirchenzeitung*, May 5, 1885.) In these words the doctrine of salvation *by grace alone* without any help on the part of sinful man is plainly rejected and condemned as un-Christian. Similar statements were made within the Iowa Synod. In the course of the controversy Drs. Pieper, Stoeckhardt, and other spokesmen of the Missouri Synod placed into their true light such utterances as those of Dr. Stellhorn and others. The result was that voices were heard within the ranks of the Ohio Synod to the effect that Stellhorn's thesis was untenable and did real harm to their own cause. Much to the grievance of Dr. Stellhorn, another mode of teaching gained ascendancy, which seemingly ascribed conversion and salvation entirely to grace alone, but at the same time retained in a hidden manner the false idea that after all the conduct of natural man is the deciding factor in conversion as in non-conversion. Put into plain language, the new mode of teaching ran thus: Fallen man is certainly unable to contribute anything toward his conversion and salvation. There is absolutely nothing whereby he can aid the work of the Holy Ghost on his heart when He approaches him with the Gospel. Man only resists the operation of the Holy Ghost, and he does this with all of his faculties. (All of this is true and Scriptural.) However, divine grace is prepared for this kind of resistance. Divine grace is stronger than man's natural wickedness, and overcomes this obstacle. If man does not offer any worse opposition to the Holy Ghost than that to which he is naturally inclined, he will certainly be converted. (Here the cloven foot begins to show.) But there is supposed to be another kind of resistance, which, as our opponents asserted, is altogether unnecessary and unexplainable, because man is not inclined to it by nature. This peculiar conduct they called "wilful resistance." (Here the false doctrine lies open before us. For according to Scripture fallen man is not only spiritually dead, but also *hostile to God and very active to everything displeasing to God*, also to wilful resistance to the Gospel.) As soon as man offers this mysterious resistance to the Holy Ghost, so we were in-

formed, the work of the Holy Ghost immediately ceases, and conversion is impossible as long as this conduct lasts.

In this new mode of teaching, Dr. Stelhorn's thesis is dropped as unsatisfactory. In fact, it was repeatedly rejected. Everything is now ascribed to the grace of God. The Holy Ghost brings about conversion without any aid on the part of natural man, in spite of his (natural) resistance. And still the decision is laid into the hands of natural man. For if man does not offer to the Holy Ghost anything worse than so-called natural resistance, the Holy Ghost can and will convert him; while, if, on the other hand, he offers entirely unnecessary wilful resistance, man thereby prevents his conversion. All seems to be very simple in this theory. The final outcome depends on whether man stops at his natural wickedness, or whether he goes beyond the limits of his innate malice. The deciding factor is the kind of resistance which natural man offers. This attempted solution is contrary to Scripture because the Scriptural doctrine of Original Sin and of Fallen Man are shallowed by it.

From among a number of quotations which we have on former occasions adduced from the writings of our opponents we shall here cite only one which is brief and easily understood. In his brochure, *The Doctrine of Conversion according to Hoenecke's Dogmatics*, Dr. Geo. Fritschel says the following of natural and wilful resistance: "Natural resistance is merely a different expression for original depravity in its manifestation. . . . Natural resistance hinders conversion and puts many obstacles in its way, but it does not prevent conversion. . . . The effect of wilful resistance is that the work of grace is not only hindered but that it must cease entirely if the self-hardening becomes permanent. This does not mean that conversion is in every case rendered impossible for all time. For saving grace may start afresh and may the second or the tenth time accomplish that which was impossible before. . . . The question as to the origin of wilful resistance, like the origin of sin itself, leads us into the depths of personal, inner life, unknown to us, and we are here confronted by a psychological mystery, which we therefore do not attempt to solve." But according to Scripture there is no mystery at this point at all, because fallen man is by nature hostile to God and very active to everything displeasing to God.

How does the *Common Confession of Faith* solve this difference in the doctrine of conversion? It says, in Chapter VII: "The sinner's conversion takes place when God brings the contrite sinner to faith in Christ as his Savior. This change of heart with respect to sin and this reliance on Christ for salvation from sin is the work of the

Holy Spirit, without any cooperation whatever from sinful man. 'No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost,' I Cor. 12, 3b'." These words contain exactly that which the contending parties still have in common, but leaves out that on which they disagree. Is sinful man by nature inclined to wilful resistance against saving grace? Missouri says, Yes; the A. L. C. says, No. Can and does the Holy Ghost ever overcome wilful resistance? Missouri says, Yes; the A. L. C. says, No.

We steadfastly affirm the truth that fallen man is by nature inclined to wilful resistance, because such passages as I Cor. 1, 18; 23ff. and others ascribe the resistance against the Gospel on the part of *those that perish* to their own natural blindness. A. L. C. men deny this truth, because, for their artfully constructed theory, they need two kinds of resistance of fallen man; one kind which man cannot avoid, and another kind the perpetration of which is quite unnecessary. We steadfastly affirm the truth that the Holy Ghost can and does overcome wilful resistance without employing irresistible force, because Scripture tells us, Eph. 1, 19-20, that our conversion is a work of divine omnipotence. God is able to do this without *forcing* the sinner, but by overcoming His resistance by the mighty power of His divine love as revealed in the Gospel. A. L. C. men deny this truth and arbitrarily declare that the Holy Ghost is able to overcome only so-called natural resistance without using force, but that He is unable to overcome wilful resistance without employing irresistible force, — a false assertion, which they have never tried to prove, and which no man ever can attempt to prove without denying the omnipotent power of divine love.

In Art. II, which is titled "Man," the expression is found that men "wilfully transgress God's holy Law in thoughts, words, and deeds." But the question is not, how does natural man conduct himself over against the Law of God? The question rather concerns his hostility to the Gospel.

Since Art. VII of the *Common Confession of Faith* states only truths on which both sides are agreed and avoids vital points of difference, we reject this article as unionistic.

3. Election or Predestination

An error in the doctrine of Conversion is always reflected in the doctrine of Election. It is common knowledge in the Lutheran Churches of our country that the Iowa Synod as well as the Ohio Synod in the first stage of the Predestinarian Controversy taught an election in view of persevering faith, which means that God has from eternity elected to eternal life all those who, as He knew, would in time believe in Christ and

remain faithful to the end. If with this formula there is associated the wrong opinion that conversion does not depend on divine grace alone, but in a certain sense also on the conduct of natural man, it constitutes a false doctrine of Election. For if the kindling of faith in the heart of a sinner depends to any extent on the conduct of man, then election in view of faith is fundamentally nothing else than the eternal decree of God to elect those who, as He saw from eternity, would in time conduct themselves in the proper way, which is not a Christian doctrine at all.

During the second decade of our century this definition of election in view of faith or *intuitu fidei* as it is usually termed, was given up, first within the Iowa Synod, and a new mode of teaching Predestination was developed, which plainly appears in the Chicago Theses. The representatives of the Ohio Synod went on record in a separate declaration to the Chicago Theses defending the conception of election *intuitu fidei*. But after the merger with Iowa, the Ohio wing of the American Lutheran Church also accepted the Iowan mode of teaching Predestination.

In order to see this new mode of teaching in the proper light it is necessary first of all to know and understand Luther's way of teaching Predestination according to Scripture. We can here give only a very brief survey of Luther's position, which will, if it please God, be substantiated more fully in a later article. When defending Predestination or Election, Luther unswervingly maintained that Election, according to Scripture, is a secret, immutable, eternal counsel or decree of God which extends over a certain number of men whom God has elected out of the mass of lost mankind, and that it is a cause of our salvation and of all that belongs to our salvation, such as repentance, faith in Christ, and all fruits of faith. Luther also maintained that this decree did not extend over those who are lost.

The doctrine of eternal Election, Luther reminds us, does not belong to the "milk" of the Word of God, not to those truths which every Christian can most easily grasp. On account of the mysteries which it involves, this doctrine belongs to the "strong wine" of Christian doctrine. It can more easily than others be misunderstood and be misused by the inexperienced. For this reason Luther also gave instruction as to how to view and to use this doctrine properly. He earnestly warned against its false use and admonished all Christians to use this doctrine in no other way than in the only correct one. He called these respective ways (the one false, the other true) viewing predestination "*a priori*" (the

wrong way) and viewing it "*a posteriori*" (the only right way).

The wrong way to view Election is this: a person might think, if I am not among the elect, I shall be lost, no matter what I do. And if, on the other hand, I am predestinated by an eternal decree of God to eternal life, I shall be saved and it does not matter what I do. So, in either case, I may as well enjoy this life and do what I please. This is speculating about the hidden counsel of God, and it will lead to a life in sin and shame and eventually to perdition.

On the other hand, a Christian who is anxious about his eternal salvation might in some dark hour think: What good will it do that I go to church, use the means of grace, pray and fight against sin, if I am not among the elect? All will be in vain, and I shall be lost in spite of all I do. Such thoughts may lead to despondency and to final despair. This also is speculating as to the hidden decree of God. All such speculating Luther calls viewing Predestination *a priori*, which is to be condemned and to be avoided under all circumstances. It does not lead to life, but to death.

The only proper way to contemplate predestination, according to Luther, is this, that we view it only in Christ as He is presented to us in the Word of God. Since Predestination is not a haphazard picking out of a few to eternal life, but since it was done "in Christ" and according to God's order of salvation, as revealed in Scripture, we can come to a certainty of our eternal election only in Christ, following the order of salvation as we find it in the Word of God. In other words, if you should be alarmed on account of your sins and afraid that you are not among the number of the elect, remember first of all that Christ, according to the eternal decree of God, has redeemed the *world*. *This certainly includes you*. And has God not called you through the Gospel? Has He not forgiven you all your sins and brought you to faith in Christ? Has He not graciously guided you up to this day, and do you not also have His promise that He will also in the future be your Helper and Savior, until you reach the final goal in heaven? Firmly believe that God has not only done all this in time, but that He has also from eternity determined to do this for you and that on the basis of His eternal decree you will certainly reach that goal. Such faith is not vain presumption, but is created in the heart of Christians by the Holy Ghost through the Word of God and will never deceive a Christian and put him to shame.

This is the doctrine of Predestination and its proper use as Luther found it revealed in Scripture. Now, we know from the writings of Nicolaus Selnecker, co-worker on the Formula of

Concord, that the authors of this confession, when they drew up Art. XI, on Predestination, carefully followed this train of thought as Luther had learned it from Scripture. Read the Eleventh Article of the Formula of Concord, especially *Trigl.*, p. 1063-1070, and you will be surprised to see how conscientiously the authors of this article laid to heart and inculcated Luther's warning against viewing Predestination *a priori* and his admonition to view it only *a posteriori*, only without using these expressions of Luther. We must firmly keep in mind this mode of teaching Predestination as we find it in Luther's writings and in the Formula of Concord if we want to see clearly the difference in the doctrine of Election as it now exists between the present American Lutheran Church and the Synodical Conference.

As said before, our opponents no longer insist on teaching a Predestination *intuitu fidei* or "in view of faith." But they did not drop this mode of teaching as a *false doctrine*. They still insist that it is a legitimate way of teaching Predestination. They dropped it merely because they now prefer a new mode of teaching, which they falsely call Luther's *a posteriori* method. This mode of teaching was developed by Dr. Geo. Fritschel of the former Iowa Synod after the *newer mode of teaching Conversion*, which has been presented above, had met with approval within the Iowa Synod.

Dr. Fritschel's ideas run as follows: There are two ways of viewing Predestination, either one of them permissible. A Christian may look at it from the standpoint of eternity. He may in his thoughts transfer himself into eternity as a starting-point and from there look forward into the future, into time. Doing this, he will see that God in His eternal counsel has predestinated all those who believe in Christ and remain faithful unto the end. This he calls viewing Predestination *a priori*. Following this method, a Christian will arrive at the so-called Election "in view of faith." Fritschel expressly called this method of teaching an Election *intuitu fidei* "a Lutheran *a priori* method." Or, A Christian may view Predestination from the standpoint of time. He may look backward from his present state of grace and ask himself, whence comes my faith in Christ, my hope of eternal life, and everything that belongs to my state of grace? Doing this, he will see that all of this is the realization of an eternal universal gracious will of God which extends over all men. But, although this will of God extends over all sinners, it is not realized in all men. It is not realized in those who wilfully resist the grace of God. But so far as it is realized, this eternal will or counsel of God is called Predestination. (From the doctrine of

Conversion we remember that according to this theory the gracious will of God is realized in those who offer it only so-called natural resistance as falsely distinguished from wilful resistance.) This looking at the universal gracious will of God from the standpoint of time, Dr. Fritschel called viewing Predestination *a posteriori*, and this method he considered preferable to the *intuitu fidei* method.

In this conception of Predestination truth and error are intertwined in such a manner that it would take a lengthy treatise to disentangle the maze of confused and confusing ideas. But every Lutheran Christian can see these two points:

1) These two different modes of viewing Predestination, from the standpoint of eternity and from the standpoint of time, cannot possibly be Luther's method, because Luther never spoke of correctly viewing Predestination from two different standpoints. Luther never distinguished two legitimate ways of viewing Predestination, one better than the other. He only distinguished between the *wrong* way which is to be avoided and the *only proper way* which comforts and strengthens a Christian. The new Iowan method presents to us two ways of approaching Predestination, one better than the other. It is therefore certain that the new method in question here is falsely called Luther's *a posteriori* method.

2) It is also easily seen that this new method is only an attempt at saving the old Iowan error that there is no real Election of certain men out of the whole of sinful humanity, but merely God's universal counsel of love which extends over all men and which is supposed to be realized in those who only offer natural resistance to the efforts of the Holy Spirit toward converting them, but which is not supposed to be realized in those who resist wilfully. Even if we should eliminate all that is wrong in this theory and retain only the elements of truth contained in it, we would not by this process gain the Scriptural doctrine of Predestination.

The fact that this standpoint theory has been accepted by the American Lutheran Church is seen from the A. L. C. *Declaration*, which says, II, C, 3: "When Scripture speaks of this eternal Election, it, as a rule, takes its position in time, after men have come to faith." As a rule, but not always. That means, there is also a way of viewing Predestination by taking your position in eternity.

This then is the difference in the doctrine of Predestination as it exists today between the A. L. C. and the Synodical Conference: We still confess Predestination as an unalterable eternal counsel or decree of God which extends over a certain number of men whom God has chosen out of the whole of the mass of fallen mankind

out of pure grace. This eternal counsel is the cause of the salvation of the elect and of all that belongs to their salvation, such as faith in Christ and the fruits of faith. We also stress the fact that this eternal decree has not yet been revealed to us in its entirety, but remains to some extent hidden to us. For this very reason all speculating about the secret counsel of God is sinful and to be avoided. The only proper way of viewing Predestination is to view it in Christ only, according to the revealed Word of God.

In the American Lutheran Church, Predestination is held to be God's eternal universal gracious will or counsel of love, but not insofar as it extends over all men, but insofar as it is realized in time. It is supposed to be not realized in those who resist wilfully. The realization of this counsel of love may be viewed from the standpoint of time or from the standpoint of eternity. The only secret for us in this doctrine is the origin of wilful resistance, the so-called psychological mystery.

How does the *Common Confession of Faith* settle this difference? Art. IV, of Election, says: "God from eternity, solely because of His grace in Christ and without any cause whatever in man, elected as His own all those whom He makes and keeps members of His kingdom and heirs of eternal life." This is not even an adequate definition of Election, much less a settlement of the doctrinal difference concerning it.

It is not a proper definition, because essential parts of this doctrine are omitted which are emphasized in the Formula of Concord and in the Brief Statement. The *Common Confession of Faith* omits the fact that Predestination is an unalterable decree of God which extends over a definite number of persons; that this decree is a cause not only of the final salvation of the elect, but also of their faith and of everything which belongs to their salvation; that the final salvation of the elect is so firmly based on their eternal Predestination that nothing can rob them of their salvation. It also belongs to a complete presentation of this doctrine that the wrong way to use it and the only proper way to view Predestination be set forth. The *Common Confession of Faith* merely says: "The Holy Spirit by the Gospel has called us and assured us of our status before God, testifying to us that He has chosen us for Himself in Christ from the foundation of the world and by the imputation of Christ's righteousness has given us the assurance that He will present us faultless before the throne of His glory." No Christian can from these words learn the wrong way of viewing Predestination which he must carefully avoid, and the right way which alone furnishes comfort and assurance of final salvation.

If it was not the intention of the authors of

this document to offer an adequate presentation of the Lutheran doctrine of Election, but to select out of this doctrine such parts only as are acceptable to both sides and to arrange them in a statement which sounds as though it could be the Lutheran doctrine of Election, they nevertheless succeeded admirably well in doing just this. Every word of it *can* be understood in the sense of the genuinely Lutheran doctrine; it *can* be understood in the sense of those who see in Election merely God's eternal counsel of love in its realization; it *can* be taken in the sense of those who may still cling to the *intuitu fidei* theory. But such a mode of procedure constitutes sinful unionism, which every faithful Lutheran rejects.

4. Justification

There has never been agreement between the American Lutheran Church and the Synodical Conference on the doctrine of objective justification. What the A. L. C. has especially objected to is what its theologians call a "justification without faith." They know only of the subjective justification of those who believe in Christ. Art. VII of the *Common Confession of Faith* tries to settle this difference by a definition of objective justification. It says: "By His redemptive work Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world; hence forgiveness of sin has been secured and provided for all men. (This is often spoken of as objective justification.)" Etc. But this is not correct. The redemptive work of Christ and the mere fact that forgiveness of sin has been secured and provided for all men are not "spoken of as objective justification." This is trying to make this doctrine palatable to its objectors. The A. L. C. would not object to such a mere mode of speaking, inaccurate as it is. Objective justification is a judgment of the Father which is pronounced on the basis of the redemptive work of the Son. The Bible text which is quoted, II Cor. 5, 19, distinguishes the two persons by saying "God was in Christ . . . not imputing their trespasses unto them." God the Father in heaven no longer imputed unto the world its trespasses, on account of the redeeming work of the Son. And this judgment of God is revealed in the written Word of God. This is not merely "often spoken of as objective justification," but it really is an objective justification. It is called objective because it is not yet subjectively appropriated by the individual sinner. The importance of this doctrine lies in the fact that on the basis of this Scripture doctrine we may say to every sinful man: "Your sins are forgiven. God no longer imputes your trespasses to you since Christ has on the Cross paid your debt. Accept this pardon of God, and it is yours. Reject it, and you throw away your eternal salvation." Of course, if

justifying faith is not considered merely as the acceptance of God's pardon in Christ, but rather as a certain quality which God wants to see in the sinner before He forgives his sin, then there is no room for objective justification. According to the A. L. C. conception the sinner must first believe, and then God stands ready to forgive his sins. The *Common Confession of Faith* tries to settle this difference by offering the A. L. C. a *faulty definition* of objective justification as though this were a work of the Son of God.

5. The Church

The difference between the Synodical Conference on the one hand and the former Iowa Synod (now a member of the American Lutheran Church) on the other hand with reference to the doctrine of the Church has always been the question: Is it Scriptural to speak of a visible side of the Church when taking the word "Church" in its proper sense of the spiritual body of Christ? The only correct answer to this question can be: No; the Church as the communion of saints is and remains an article of faith which we believe on the basis of Scripture. Whatever we believe on the basis of Scripture is never visible to us in this life.

The *Common Confession of Faith* does not touch on this difference at all. Instead, in Art. IX, of the Church, it reflects the same unclear and confused views which have been spread in recent years by the "44" in the interest of false union. The unclearness consists in confusing the spiritual unity which the Holy Ghost works in the one holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, with the external unity which exists (or does not exist) between visible church bodies. In this respect the very first paragraph of Art. IX is not quite clear. It says there: "Through the means of grace He calls all its members into fellowship with Himself and also unites the members in fellowship with one another." What is here meant by the expression "fellowship with one another"? Spiritual unity, or also external fraternization? The closing words of this chapter seem to suggest the latter. For there we read: "We must also be alert and susceptible to the Lord's leading to establish and maintain fellowship with those whom He has made one with us in the faith, and to seek to win the erring and the wayward for unity in the true faith. We are mindful of our Lord's intercessory prayer that we, who are His brethren, may be one, even as He and the Father are one." Here the words "establish and maintain fellowship" evidently mean external church fellowship and fraternal relations with other Christians. In this connection the reference to the Lord's intercessory prayer is confusing. Our Lord did not pray for

external fellowship between visible church bodies, but for the true spiritual unity of all true Christians in the world. This true spiritual unity is in itself invisible to us, but it bears fruits which all the world can see. To apply this prayer of Christ to external union between two church bodies which are not yet united in doctrine is a misuse of the Word of God and of the prayer of the Savior.

6. The Ministry

The differences in the doctrine of the Ministry between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church have been grossly neglected in all union efforts from the Chicago Theses down to the present *Common Confession of Faith*. It may suffice for the present to say that there are two points in the doctrine of the former Iowa Synod which have never been duly taken into account and which have never been removed in the union efforts of the last four decades.

1. It is the Lutheran doctrine, and the Synodical Conference has always confessed this doctrine, that the keys and therewith the right and the duty to call ministers have been committed to the whole Church, and hence to all Christians *as such*, exactly as the Gospel and the means of grace have been committed to all Christians. Our opponents have always curtailed this right of Christians from a special interest for the Ministry. While admitting that the Gospel has been committed immediately to all Christians, they have always contended that the keys and the right to call have been committed to "the Church in its totality," whereby they mean to say that Christians have such a right only in conjunction with the clergy.

2. We confess that the right and the duty to judge doctrine belongs to the functions of the Ministry, but not to the Ministry alone, but also to the laity. Every Christian has the right and the duty to judge the teaching of the Ministry according to Scripture. Our opponents do not only ascribe to the Ministry the right to judge doctrine, but *the final decision* about right or wrong in questions of doctrine, and to the laity the duty to accept those final decisions on the basis of Luke 10, 16. If the A. L. C. no longer holds these aberrations of the former Iowa Synod, this should in some way be made clear.

7. The Lutheran Confessions

Since in our day some church bodies officially subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions while actual public teaching in print as well as in pulpit disagrees to a great extent with the doctrines set forth in the Lutheran Confessions, it is necessary to add that only such church bodies can be considered truly Lutheran as exercise doctrinal discipline and see to it that the Lutheran doctrine

and nothing else is actually taught. (Cf. Preface to Book of Concord, especially p. 25, Trigl. Edit. — P. H. B.)

It is an alarming symptom of the downward course of the Missouri Synod that in its own midst true evangelical discipline has begun to disappear.

8. The Last Things

In the last chapter of the *Common Confession of Faith* such errors as the expectation of a mass conversion of the Jews, a preliminary resurrec-

are not so much as mentioned in the *Common Confession of Faith*, although they have never been settled.

* * * *

These are the reasons why it is impossible for us to accept the *Common Confession of Faith* of the two committees in question as a basis for the establishment of fraternal relations with the American Lutheran Church.

Those Missourians who, after due deliberation, may still insist on accepting the *Common Confes-*

❶ What Is The Truth?

From the *Lutheran Witness*, Convention Series, June 15, 1932, Edited by Prof. Theo. Graebner, Prof. Martin Sommer, p. 3 —

“St. Louis-Thiensville Report

“The doctrine of the church and the ministerial offices has for some years been the subject of joint deliberation between the faculty of Concordia Seminary and of Thiensville (Wisconsin Synod). Since the more recent deliberations of these faculties have been inaugurated by a resolution of the college of presidents, a report on this matter was submitted on the afternoon of Thursday, June 9. Prof. Graebner by resolution of the St. Louis Seminary faculty submitted a set of theses which had been adopted by a committee of the faculty and by the Thiensville faculty and which had since received the unanimous approval of the St. Louis theologians. In four brief resolutions the two faculties announced their agreement in the doctrines of the church, of the ministry, and of the act of exclusion from Synod and congregations respectively. The college of presidents by resolution gratefully recognized the endeavors which had led to this happy conclusion of a matter which has threatened the peace of the church.”

Did Dr. Graebner not tell us the truth in 1932—or has he not been telling us the truth since 1945?
Or, — are we going to hear the question of Pilate again, John 18, 38? P. H. B.

tion of martyrs, and a visible millennial reign of Christ on earth before the Day of Judgment are rejected as errors *only conditionally*. They are held as errors *if they are taught as signs of Christ's second advent*. If chiliasts within the American Lutheran Church want to teach and to preach these errors publicly, they will only have to be careful not to teach them “as signs of Christ's second advent,” and they will be keeping within the limits of the *Common Confession of Faith*.

The differences regarding the principle of Open Questions and of the doctrine of Sunday

From *Prayer Fellowship*, by Theodore Graebner (Concordia Publishing House) 1945, p. 18 —

“Inconsistency of the Separatist Position”

“As a matter of fact, we have never in practice made any consistent application of the theory that joint prayer is permissible only when there is agreement in the faith and profession among those who meet together. A strict application of this principle would mean that we could never, during the past thirty years, have opened a meeting of representatives of the Wisconsin Synod with prayer. We have now for almost a generation acknowledged sharp differences in the doctrine of the ministry and of the Church.”

sion of Faith as a satisfactory platform for the establishment of fraternal relations with the American Lutheran Church (and who may not be satisfied with the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod* for such purposes) are evidently in doctrinal agreement with that church body, and not with the Missouri Synod, and should join the American Lutheran Church. This would be the only honorable thing for them to do. They should not try to oppress and tyrannize the consciences of those who are firmly convinced that the position and practice to which the Missouri Synod has always adhered in

former years was right and Scriptural, and who are therefore for conscience sake bound to continue in the old paths. J. B.

* * *

Editor Edw. W. Schramm, in the "Lutheran Standard" (official organ of the American Lutheran Church), March 4, 1950, p. 10:

"If the major premise of the Missouri Synod's committee [re the National Lutheran Council] is correct; namely, that you can't work together in Christ's kingdom in ministering to souls unless you are fully agreed on every point of 'doctrine' (by which many Missourians mean their particular brand of human theology): if that premise is correct, the conclusion of the committee [that Missouri should not join the NLC] is dead right.

"The National Lutheran Council is already a federation. For that reason I think the present proposals of the Committee of Thirty-Four to 'transform' it into a federation are a bit confusing. . . .

"If the Missouri Synod as such follows the lead of the majority on this committee [its own committee on the NLC] and is convinced that there must be agreement on every point of human theology — as distinguished from 'doctrine' in the true, Biblical sense of that term — before it can have any part at all in the just counsels and good works of the National Lutheran Council, and if the Missouri Synod would feel, were it to join the Council, that its God-given mission was to reform the rest of us and try to bring us into this same straitjacket, then I must say that the Missouri Synod would do itself and the rest of us a great service by staying out of the National Lutheran Council — until it has a change of heart.

"Such a deliberate decision for aloofness on the part of the Missouri Synod would, of course, tend to draw the eight church bodies in the N. L. C. even closer together than they already are."

ON THE UNION FRONT

As the A. L. C. Sees It

The *Lutheran Standard* of the American Lutheran Church summarizes an article on "The Year in Lutheran Unity" (December 31, 1949, p. 4) under the following three points:

1. Between our Church and the Missouri Synod there is now the definite prospect of agreement on a 'common confession' that, if consummated, should lead to altar and pulpit fellowship.

"2. There is now a definite plan, which seems likely to materialize, for federating our American

Lutheran Church with the other seven church bodies in the National Lutheran Council. The 1950 conventions of these bodies are also to express themselves on their willingness to work toward an organic merger of these bodies.

"3. Negotiations between the delegates of our own Church and those of the E. L. C. and U. E. L. C. have resulted in very definite proposals that look toward the organic merging of these bodies. If all goes well — and at this time the prospects of things going well seem bright — the decision to merge could be made by the three bodies in 1952, and the actual merger could be effected as early as 1954."

A. L. C. District Presidents Endorse Three-way Merger

Under this heading the *Lutheran Standard* of October 29, 1949, p. 9, reports: "The College of District Presidents of the American Lutheran Church 'heartily endorsed' the proposed merger of the American Lutheran Church, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church . . . at a meeting held in Chicago on October 4."

The same article states that the A. L. C. District Presidents passed the following resolution: "Having received Dr. Em. Poppen's report on current fellowship negotiations between the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, and our American Lutheran Church with satisfaction, the College of District Presidents of the A. L. C. . . . heartily endorses this unity effort and hereby advises the Committee on Intersynodical Fellowship and the Executive Committee of the A. L. C. that we are eager to have the suggested union effected soon."

Something to Bear in Mind

A committee composed of several representatives of each of the bodies involved in the proposed three-way merger, had previously worked out the plan and proposed it.

In the *Lutheran Standard* of October 8, 1949, we are informed that the delegation of the American Lutheran Church held a preliminary meeting to draw up some "principles of unity." These turned out to be four in number. The first two are general, and call for Christian unity, especially among Lutherans. We quote the remainder of the principles, which are more detailed:

"3. We sincerely desire the strengthening and further development of the National Lutheran Council as a functional agency for all Lutheran bodies in America.

"4. We find in our relationships with other Lutheran bodies varying degrees of unity; we wish to establish the form of fellowship com-

mensurate with that degree of unity which exists in each instance."

The significant thing to bear in mind is that the same nine-man A. L. C. delegation (1) drew up the above principles on September 15, 1949, (2) considered an early draft of the "common confession" (proposed A. L. C. — Missouri Synod union document) on the same day, (3) agreed on proposed merger plans with delegates of the E. L. C. and the U. E. L. C. on the following day, September 16, and (4) approved the final draft of the "common confession" in the meeting with the Missouri Synod representatives on December 5 and 6, 1949.

We are informed by a member of the Missouri Synod's Committee on Doctrinal Unity that the A. L. C. representatives heaped assurances upon assurances that the "common confession" means what Missourians might want it to mean.

The A. L. C., and specifically its mandated committee, is again in the market bidding for fellowship on the best possible terms. It is extending its hand to the left (E. L. C. and U. E. L. C.) and at the same time to the right (Missouri). It is no wonder that the A. L. C. can have such a principle as number 4 quoted above. And it is no wonder that the "common confession" is largely neither fish nor flesh.

Common Law Marriage

The Editor of the *Lutheran Standard* summarizes things when he states, after bringing examples of joint religious work in the N. L. Council, that "*at least in a small measure, the work of these eight bodies is being merged through the National Lutheran Council.*" (Emphasis in original.)

Editor Schramm also expresses his convictions in the *Lutheran Standard* of May 28, 1949, p. 9: "Perhaps if all the Lutherans are ever to be married it will be by common-law marriage. Every time we attempt an orthodox, official marriage ceremony and give opportunity to show cause why the parties 'may not lawfully be joined together,' someone voices an objection, and the proceedings come to naught."

Correction

A reliable source informs us that the last sentence of the statement which we quoted from *The Lutheran*, in our column of February, 1950, p. 23, is incorrect, that the Lutheran Men of Denver have no connection with the radio program mentioned, but that it is sponsored by the Colorado Lutheran Women's Missionary League in cooperation with the radio station.

We ourselves noticed an inconsequential error in the very next paragraph, at the top of page 24. The Chicago Sunday Evening Club observed its fortieth anniversary recently, not its silver anniversary, as stated.

U. L. C. "Interpretation" of Rom. 16, 17

The *Lutheran* (United Lutheran Church), published a Bible lesson series last year under the title "Know the Bible — Explanation of the Epistle to the Romans," by John Schmidt. Coming to Chapt. 16, v. 17 (issue of September 21, 1949, p. 31), we find a few paragraphs from which we quote in part: "It was at this point in preparing his letter to the Romans that Paul took the pen into his own hand. Until now he has used the services of a stenographer (amanuensis) with whom we shall soon make acquaintance. . . . Here the changed tone of his letter is striking. . . . Nor can we say with certainty the precise nature of the danger against which he warns. It may have been some form of the Galatian heresy of work-righteousness or a false teaching that rooted in the pagan separation of religion from life and which insisted that it mattered not at all how a believer behaves (compare Ch. 6). Paul warns that Christians must 'keep their eye on' these snares or traps that are placed before them. Jealousies and wrath are contrary to evangelical doctrine and must be rejected emphatically. Those who proclaim such falsehood do not serve the Lord and there must be no association with them."

There is similarity here to certain Statemantarian and St. Louis faculty interpretations and opinions.

The Federal Council at Augustana

Supplementing the report of the *Lutheran Witness* (January 24, 1950, p. 27), concerning the interdenominational Seminarians' meeting held on the campus of Augustana College (of the Augustana Lutheran Church, formerly Swedish Synod) at Rock Island, Illinois, in December, 1949, we submit the following paragraph from the account in the *Lutheran* (January 18, 1950, p. 7): "Dr. Samuel M. Cavert of the Federal Council of Churches told the students that the day of one united Protestant church is far off, but said 'we can look forward toward a merging of the various denominational groups into five or six strong major sects.' In the meantime, he said, the churches can achieve 'the kind of unity that can come through co-operation — not as an occasional practice but as constant, deliberate policy'."

A. V. K.

● Book Review

Facts of Biblical Chronology. Established by Wm. E. Georgi. 68 pages, 6×9, stiff paper covers. Order from the author, 4018 Winter Street, Fort Wayne 5, Indiana. \$1.23 post-paid.

For more than 30 years Pastor Georgi has occupied himself with questions of Biblical chronology. His work is based on a painstaking study of source material, and it is evident that he is well versed in the literature pertinent to this subject.

Such as may be particularly interested in chronology will by all means want to get a copy of this book. Others who acquire a copy may be surprised to find themselves interested in a subject which may not have particularly intrigued them before. A real wealth of material is packed into the pages of this book and elaborated upon.

Special acquaintance with the field of chronology would be needed to pass competent final judgment on the many critical questions disposed of in this publication. But everyone will soon see that every chapter shows that we have in Pastor Georgi's book the careful work of an author who faithfully and consistently accepts the Scriptures as the Word of God in every detail.

The various periods of Bible history provide the framework for its chronology. To follow up the reconstructed Hebrew Calendar, as Pastor Georgi does, as road-marks toward ascertaining the true dates of Biblical events, will turn out to be a most delightful task. As in any solid theological work, in whatever particular field of theology this may be, important matters in other fields also come into play. Thus, like other prophecies, the prophecies of Daniel, and so the prophecy of the "Seventy Weeks" (Year-Weeks) or heptads of Dan. 9, 24ff., which are elucidated by their fulfillment, or later established facts, necessitate an excursion into the field of exegesis. The author assigns Dan. 9, 26, not to Christ, but to the anointed High Priest of the Jews, who was despoiled of his sovereign power in the year 26 A. D., p. 63. (Cp. the marginal readings in any good edition of the A. V.) In prophecy and fulfillment the author finds precise correspondence in that date.

The well known slogan "Take and read!" may well be applied to this publication.

P. H. B.

* * * *

Everlasting Arms. Sermons for Festivals and Special Occasions. By Oswald Riess, Pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church, Detroit.

205 pages, 5½×8. Ernst Kaufmann, Inc., New York. \$2.75.

An extensive and thoughtful Foreword has been written to this volume of sermons (pp. 9-23) by Prof. O. C. Rupprecht of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in which he briefly sets forth the principles of preaching, surveys the field of current publications of this kind, and gives a good evaluation of the sermons contained in this book. Speaking of "the incalculable loss which the Church has sustained through the disuse of the masterful homiletical products of previous generations," such as those of Dr. Walther, he says: "The loss of such sermons is bad enough, but the substitution of material which is not only inferior, but harmful, is even more deplorable. The use of such material was to be expected, and it is going on today." And again: "There is an urgent need of sermons that are not merely attractive in form but dependable in content. We need sermons that speak a modern language but that point out 'the old paths,' Jer. 6, 16." (Pp. 11. 12.) With all of which we agree, as we do also with the following: "In an age which requests preachers not to attack the poison of false teaching or wrong living but to 'cultivate the positive approach' (as though the latter could truly exclude the former), it is refreshing to find sermons which are *against* something." (P. 15.)

Pastor Riess here offers 21 sermons for such festivals as Christmas, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, Epiphany, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity, Reformation, and Thanksgiving (2); and for such occasions as Mission, Youth, Church Dedication, Church Anniversary (2), and Ordination days, Luther Day, and Commencement Day. The themes of all of these sermons are such as would be worthy of being listed in their entirety here (Christmas in the Heart, "How Long Have I to Live?", "Underneath are the Everlasting Arms," etc.). Pastor Riess speaks to the heart. All of these sermons of his are characterized by great earnestness. They are not only doctrinal, but also doctrinally sound throughout; and they are at the same time also eminently practical. They are really based on the text, and their whole external arrangement is quite excellent. They can be put into the hands of the average church member, and that is one of the final tests of a good sermon and of a good sermon book. We heartily commend this publication and hope that it may reach a wide circle of appreciative readers.

P. H. B.

We Believe. An Elementary Re-Affirmation of the Fundamentals of the Evangelical Christian Religion. By Theo. Huggenvik. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota. X and 149 pages. \$1.25.

There are excellent books on the market which may be used either as guide-lines in teaching adult classes or as refresher courses in Bible hours, as, for example, the monographs by Luecke, J. T. Mueller, Little, and others. This book, by Professor Huggenvik, of St. Olaf College, has just come off the press, and its purpose is the same as that of the study books named above. The author apparently has a good deal of experience in presenting Bible teachings in the class-room and elsewhere; for the book, on the whole, clearly and adequately teaches the saving truths of the Bible. Pastors may want to use the book as indicating the possibility of the psychological rather than the logical sequence of subjects in teaching adult classes.

But the honest reviewer is compelled to say that the book cannot be recommended without qualifications. For it shows aberrations in the very teachings which have been in controversy in the Lutheran bodies of America these many years. There are evidences of concessions, of compromises, of confusion. On pages 16 and 119 the creation of the world in six ordinary days is denied, the author evidently not noticing that the "beginning" spoken of in Gen. 1 is not a fixed entity, but a starting-point. In Ps. 90, 4 and II Pet. 3, 8 the text says that a thousand years (which to us must remain a thousand years) *in the Lord's sight* are as a day; but Exod. 20, 11 and 31, 15-17 show that the Lord speaks of time in connection with the creation story as it is measured by men. Any concession to the evolutionary theory knocks the props out from under the doctrine of inspiration, meaning that every word and every letter was penned under the direction of the Holy Spirit. — Furthermore, the text, on pages 42, 43, and 46 shows that the author confuses universal grace and the election of grace. And the *theologoumenon* "in view of faith" is boldly stated on p. 42, in spite of Dr. Reu's clinching arguments against its use in Lutheran teaching. — Then there is a peculiar contradiction on pages 36 and 37; for on the former page we are told that "we, who are dead in trespasses and sin must be quickened by God's Spirit in His creative and redeeming power," while on p. 37 the statement is made: "Where the heart is not then wilfully closed against the Spirit's influence," etc. Holy Writ teaches that the heart of man is *changed by the creative power* of the Spirit's grace and that man's opposition to the Gospel is wilful and stubborn until the miracle

of conversion is effected. The error of the author appears again on p. 46. The chapter on the Church does not draw the necessary distinction between the invisible and the so-called visible Church. In short: In spite of the merits of the book, it must be used with great caution, lest old errors be perpetuated. P. E. KRETZMANN.

⊗ What Our Readers Say

"Your stand gives me the assurance that there may be enough steadfastness in our Missouri Synod to stem the tide of unionism. If our seminaries are filled with teachers who lean to unionism, what assurance has our local congregation of getting a pastor not tainted with this unionism in case we should lose our pastor by a call or by death?" — A Layman, Pennsylvania.

"I am enclosing a check for \$5 for the *Confessional Lutheran*, the hope and bulwark of conservative Lutheranism." — Professor Concordia Teachers College.

"I am interested in your advocacy of fidelity to confessions." — Professor, American Lutheran Church.

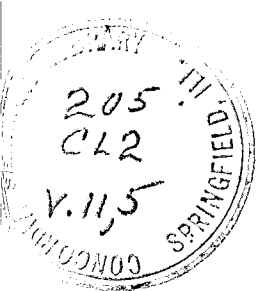
"I have just finished reading all of the *Confessional Lutheran* issues from January, 1945, to date. I sincerely regret that your fine publication has gone unnoticed by me for so long a time. Can you assist me in getting as many back numbers prior to 1945 as possible? It was more than a coincidence that a brother pastor handed me a March, 1949, issue at a time when I was more than a little shaky on the question of fellowship. The *Confessional Lutheran* has straightened me out." — Pastor, Illinois.

"Yesterday I received my *Confessional Lutheran*, and I have just finished reading 'The Statement Controversy up to Date.' I believe that this is one of the best things you have ever published. It is something that I have been waiting for a long time. After reading this, our laymen will understand and know what to do. I believe the article should be published as a pamphlet as soon as possible, and I hereby pledge my financial aid." — Pastor, Indiana.

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

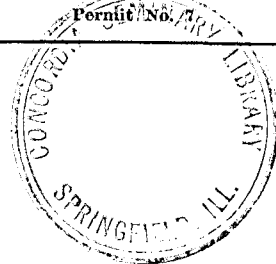
THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD



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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. I, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

MAY, 1950

NUMBER 5

IN THIS ISSUE: The Church Situation in Germany — The EKID and the VELKD — The Constitution of the EKID — What of "Bad Boll"? — The Case of Pfarrer Hopf — Letter of Dr. Theo. Graebner to Bishop Meiser — The Ousting of Pfarrer Hopf by Bishop Meiser — The Success of Our Free Church Brethren in Germany — A Plea for Direct Relief to Our Lutheran Brethren in Europe — What Our Readers Say.

● The Church Situation in Germany

This issue of our journal is being devoted to the church situation in Germany. Since the termination of actual warfare in Germany in 1945, developments among Protestants there have come hard and fast, and the fate of the whole Lutheran State or Provincial Churches, is largely wrapped up in them. Not only our Free Church brethren in Germany, but all of us who want to remain true Lutherans and who also want to help preserve true Lutheranism everywhere, must be

interested in the fate of Lutheranism wherever it may be found. Lutheranism is fighting for its very existence, so far as it is still fighting at all, in the Lutheran State Churches of Germany. It has been outflanked by a great unionistic movement and must engage in a life-and-death struggle if it is to survive there. Lutherans outside the State Churches of Germany, not only in that land, but in all lands, must know of this conflict and take up their position over against it. This all the more since the same temptation to un-Scriptural union threatens orthodox churches throughout the world. Whoever can view silently

THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN

Published in the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism
By the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau
(One Dollar Per Year)

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Articles intended for publication are to be addressed to
the office of publication: Box 73, Clinton, Iowa.

Subscriptions (\$1.00 per year) are to be sent to
Rev. Eldor Mueller, 910 Second Avenue, Sterling, Illinois.
Please notify us promptly of any change of address.

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of membership includes a subscription to the "Confessional
Lutheran."

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the latest achievements of Unionism among Lutherans in Germany and fail to testify against this great destroyer of the Church, as opportunity to do this presents itself, must know that in just that measure he becomes guilty of nothing less than denial of the truth and unfits himself for the same conflict with unionism in his own immediate surroundings. And this again all the more since Missouri has, like other Lutheran Churches in America, actually entered upon the European scene to take an active part in what is happening there.

If any of our readers will, as a result of the information we have here compiled, gain a better picture as to what is going on among Lutherans

in Germany, and, as a result, be better fitted for the conflict before them, we shall feel that our labors have been well repaid.

P. H. B.

☉ The EKID and the VELKD

State-supported Churches in Germany, inclusive of Provincial Lutheran Churches, have for so long a time been intertwined with their country's political structure that the fate of the one has invariably been interwoven with that of the other. It was therefore but natural that the crash with which the rule of Nazism (German National Socialism) and actual warfare in Germany ended in 1945 brought about also the breakdown of its existing ecclesiastical structure so far as German Provincial Churches are concerned. With the seizure of government by the various occupying powers, German State-Church leaders immediately set about to reorganize their domain. The outcome, among Protestants, was the unionistic EKID as it is usually referred to for brevity's sake, — *die Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*, "the Evangelical Church in Germany." (The first regular convention of the EKID was held in Bethel in Westphalia on January 9-13, 1949; cp. *C. T. M.*, October, 1948, p. 785ff.; April, 1949, p. 293f.) Concurrently with the formation of the EKID, most of the Lutheran Provincial Churches constituted themselves a United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany, — *die Vereinigte Evangelische Luthersche Kirche Deutschlands*, usually referred to as VELKD for short. However, the VELKD is merely a bloc within the EKID, a union of Lutheran, Reformed, and United (uniert) Churches whose power is supreme. In fact, so bewitched are State Church Lutherans by the broader union of the EKID that some of them, for instance, the (Lutheran) State Church of Wuerttemberg and of Oldenburg, would not even go along with the face-saving VELKD movement.

The EKID presents a somewhat complicated picture to the casual observer, as unionistic church bodies usually do. In this issue of our journal a simple graph is being presented which shows the whole structure of the EKID at a glance, — its organization, its membership, and the scope of its work. This graph, which our readers may want to keep for future reference, appeared in *Christ und Welt*, Vol. II, No. 25, June 23, 1949, an Evangelical paper published in Stuttgart, Wuerttemberg. Dr. Eugen Gerstenmaier, until recently director of the EKID's charity arm, called "Hilfswerk," but more latterly come to full blossom as a politician and, as a candidate of the Christian Democratic Union

Party, elected to a seat in the Federal Diet of Western Germany, has been in close touch with the paper named. A few changes in personnel and office addresses have taken place within the administration of the EKID since the graph presented herewith was first published; however, it should suffice for our present purpose.

We are also publishing a few paragraphs of the Constitution of the EKID in this issue. A glance at the Constitution of the EKID and its organizational machinery should show any intelligent person that the EKID is a union which is irreconcilable with the confession of the Lutheran Church, and that the VELKD is but a powerless bloc within it. Its claim to being a Church is proclaimed to the world by its very name. The work unionistically engaged in it by member churches is church work, — pastoral work among students, joint youth work, home and foreign mission work, etc. As to the real nature of its "Hilfswerk," its director has said: "We can say without exaggeration that the Hilfswerk is the most churchly of all endeavors of the Church. As to its structure, its make-up, and its classification it is nothing else than Church, Church in the act of giving aid, an auxiliary church. It wants to be just what it calls itself: the Hilfswerk of the Church. In no sense of the word does it want to stand alongside of the Church and be something by itself. For the future of the Hilfswerk it is of decisive importance that this fact be correctly understood. . . . At all events the purpose of the Hilfswerk is to bring about a development of the Church into a brotherhood and to further this brotherhood as much as possible." (Cp. Wis. Synod *Theol. Quart.*, July, 1948, p. 208.)

Let no one even try to tell you that the EKID merely represents "cooperation in externals"!

P. H. B.

● The Constitution of the EKID

(We herewith present some of the more important stipulations of this document, with brief comments. — P. H. B.)

The Preamble, setting forth the basic confession of the EKID —

"The foundation of the Evangelical Church in Germany is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is given to us in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. In acknowledging this foundation, the Evangelical Church in Germany confesses itself to the one Lord of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

"In common with the ancient Church the Evangelical Church in Germany stands on the ground of the Creeds of the ancient Church.

"For the understanding of Holy Scripture as well as of the ancient Creeds of the Church the Confessions of the Reformation accepted by the Lutheran, Reformed, and United (*uniert*) Member Churches are authoritative within them."

Comment: The EKID confesses itself to the Personal foundation of Christian faith, Christ, as "Lord of the Church" and possibly to its dogmatic foundation ("the Gospel of Jesus Christ"), but not to its organic foundation, that is, to the Holy Scriptures as the source of Christian doctrine. This leaves the greatest latitude for Modernism, which is so widespread and rampant in its midst. — Need we comment on the equal authority of the *Lutheran, Reformed, and United* Confessions in its midst?

"Art. I. — 1. The Evangelical Church in Germany is a union (*Bund*) of Lutheran, Reformed, and United Churches. It represents the confessional basis of the Member Churches and congregations and takes for granted that they let their confession become effective in doctrine, life, and church organization."

Comment: Lutherans who have joined the EKID have thus declared that they will let the false doctrines of the Reformed and United Confessions *become effective*. They cannot as members of the EKID possibly reject such doctrines. Cp. also the remarks under Art. I, 2, following.

"Art. I. — 2. In the Evangelical Church in Germany the existing *fellowship* (*Gemeinschaft*) of German Evangelical Christendom is visible. . . . It calls on its Member Churches to listen to the testimony of the brethren. It helps them, where this is demanded, toward a *joint defense against false doctrine destructive of the Church*." (Our emphasis.)

Comment: Once more, Lutherans within the EKID are bound to "listen to" the testimony of their Reformed and United "brethren" within the "fellowship" of the EKID, whose testimony they must *permit to become effective*. A common (*gemeinsam*) defense against false doctrine "destructive of the Church" by a fellowship of Lutheran, Reformed, and United Churches, particularly in view of the additional stipulations already noted, cannot possibly include defense against the false doctrines of the Reformed Church, such as are rejected in the Confession of the Lutheran Church contained in its own Christian Book of Concord. Cp. Art. V, below, and our remarks there.

"Art. II. — 1. *The rights of the Evangelical Church in Germany and its Member Churches must rest on the basis designated in the Preamble and in Art. I.*"

Comment: The rights of Member Churches of the EKiD must rest on "the Confessions of the Reformation accepted by the *Lutheran, Reformed, and United Member Churches*"! This deprives Member Churches of any contrary rights which they may have enjoyed previous to their membership in the EKiD.

"Art. II. — 3. The Evangelical Church in Germany belongs to the ecumenical order (*steht in der Ordnung der Oekumene*)."

Comment: The EKiD is a member of the World Council of Churches. Lutherans in the EKiD are delegated to the council as representatives of the EKiD, not as members of VELKD.

"Art. V. — "The regulation of the relation of Member Churches to one another is a regulation of brotherliness."

Comment: Cp. Art. I, 2 and our remarks there. The Augsburg Confession, *e. g.*, in Art. X, declares of truly *Lutheran* churches: "Of the Supper of the Lord they teach that the Body and Blood of Christ are truly present, and are distributed to those who eat in the Supper of the Lord; and they reject those that teach otherwise." "Lutheran" Churches within the EKiD are thus expressly bound to an exact opposite position over against Reformed teachers, whom true Lutheranism rejects. Again we repeat: "Lutherans" within the EKiD must let the false doctrines of Reformed teachers *become effective* instead of rejecting them together with their teachers. Indiscriminate admittance of Lutherans and Reformed to Communion is the established practice and rule of the EKiD.

"Art. XII. Church laws and other regulations having legal power are to be submitted by Member Churches to the Council of the EKiD at the time of their announcement at the latest. They are to be altered if the Council informs them that they are contrary to the regulations of the whole Church."

Comment: This makes Member Churches powerless.

P. H. B.

• What of "Bad Boll"?

Our readers know that in 1948 officials of the Missouri Synod instituted a theological "Begegnung" with State-Church Lutherans in Germany at Bad Boll who are members of the VELKD

and of the EKiD, and that this "Begegnung" was continued during the summer of 1949.

What is this "Begegnung"?

However well meant this "Begegnung" may be, we can give our approval neither to the basic premise on which it was instituted nor to the manner in which it has been carried out.

The basic error of Bad Boll can be summarized in two simple words: FALSE FRATERNIZATION.

The false fraternization underlying this "Begegnung" became very apparent at Bad Boll I (1948) when even a "United" (*uniert*) bishop was invited to preach the sermon in one of the services which preceded the several series of conferences at the "Begegnung." (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, February, 1949, p. 20.) Greater caution in this particular respect seems to have been exercised at Bad Boll II (1949). However, whatever of this sort has gone on is but part of a larger, unacceptable program: Unionistic State Church Lutherans are (to their great and pleasant surprise) being dealt with by Missourians as brethren who are being encouraged to remain within their sinful union. They are being told by no means to leave either their unionistic State Churches or the EKiD and to join the fellowship of our own Free Church brethren, which has been decried as a Lutheran "ghetto." On the other hand, Confessional Lutherans who protest the unionism of the EKiD are not only censured for their faithful testimony — by Missourians, mind you! — but they are even being roughly dealt with, thanks to Missourian encouragement. The official line of Missourians, where God has said "Avoid them!," Rom. 16, 17, is: No; join them, and see how the EKiD turns out!

It is significant that Dr. Theo. Graebner, one of the leading "44," was also the leading spirit among those who were sent to Germany to inaugurate the "Begegnung" at Bad Boll in 1948, and that he was again delegated to represent Missouri at it in 1949. For it is really in accordance with the false principles of the "44," of which he is one of the most outstanding exponents, that this "Begegnung" has been spawned. It is the basic principle of this faction within the Missouri Synod that instead of avoiding the fellowship of those who persist in teaching false doctrine, we must join with them and endeavor to be a leaven in their midst.

This is the real spot in these feasts of charity. It is unfaithfulness to the Word of God. May God soon bring it to nought!

P. H. B.

• The Case of Pfarrer Hopf

The case of Pastor Friedr. Wilh. Hopf illustrates what we have said about the spirit of Bad Boll. Pastor Hopf has since 1936 been pastor of the Lutheran congregation at Muehlhausen bei Bamberg in Oberfranken, and he has as such been associated with the Lutheran State Church of Bavaria. Together with Dr. Herm. Sasse (until recently professor at the University of Erlangen, now in Australia) and other theologians of a confessional tendency, united in the "Schwabacher Konvent," he made it a requirement that his Church free itself from a unionistic constitution forced upon it by the government of Hitler in 1933. Through the years, he and others fought untiringly against unionism within the Lutheran State Church. When Lutheran State Churches in Germany nevertheless proceeded to join with Reformed and United (*uniert*) Churches in the consummation of the thoroughly unionistic EKID (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* — Evangelical Church in Germany), Pastor Hopf refused to be bound in anything but externals to the authorities of the Bavarian State Church, who had in turn bound themselves to the EKID. The result was that Bishop Meiser ousted him from his church and from his parsonage, contrary to the will of his congregation, within which the bishop caused division. With the help of the political arm of the State, State Church authorities had him removed to a neighboring Catholic village, by the assignment of living quarters there. From here he is, under great external difficulties, serving those members of his flock who have not been intimidated against continuing to desire and to accept his services. (He is now in fellowship with our Free Church brethren, and could very well represent the Independent Lutheran Church of Baden, Hessen, and Niedersachsen, of which he is a member, as professor at the seminary at Oberursel if Missourian officials would not say No.)

All of this is tragic. And it shows how unscrupulously unionists, who invariably claim a monopoly on love, deal with such as for conscience sake cling to the old Truth.

But to us the most tragic thing about the case of Pfarrer Hopf is the part Missourians have had in it. For, not only are Missourians silent about this kind of thing, but State Church Lutherans have actually received encouragement toward acting precisely in the manner in which Bishop Meiser is acting over against such Confessional Lutherans as Pastor Hopf. Previous to Pastor Hopf's ousting, Dr. Theo. Graebner wrote a letter to Bishop Meiser which became widely known throughout Germany and in which

he encouraged the bishop in his unionistic activities. In this letter Dr. Graebner endorsed the EKID and expressly condemned the confessional attitude over against it of such men as Pfarrer Hopf, Dr. Sasse, and our Free Church brethren, all of whom he specifically named, as he likewise took pains to name, with severest disapproval, our Norwegian Synod brethren in their separation from merger Lutherans in 1917 and the Fundamentalist group led by Dr. Machen in their separation from the liberalistically infected Presbyterian Church. All of which goes to show how thoroughgoing is the unionism for which Dr. Graebner has come to stand in these latter days. Dr. Graebner's letter played an important role in the ouster of Pastor Hopf. It was used to tell his congregation that even from there where one would have least expected it, from Missouri, came condemnation of Pastor Hopf's Confessional position. It was Dr. Graebner who gave to Pastor Hopf the real stab in the back. Bishop Meiser only administered the *coup de grace*.

Dr. Graebner's infamous letter is such public property in Germany that copies of it came to us from different sources. We shall here append it, in translation, as important source material for future historians regarding the situation in Germany and the attitude of leading Missourians over against it in these critical days.

P. H. B.

• Letter of Dr. Theo. Graebner to Bishop Meiser

(Translated from the German by P. H. B.)

March 28, 1949.

My dear, highly esteemed Bishop:

First of all, my hearty thanks for your friendly and detailed communication of the 15th of this month. I am at present occupied with preliminary studies for three essays to be delivered at Bad Boll 1949, besides my class-work in the seminary. I can, therefore, not jot down more than the following — but this I owe you.

Since receipt of your letter I got a communication from Dr. Kressel, describing in detail what happened at the meeting of which you informed me, on March 18. This report induces you to inform me that I cannot approve at all Dr. Hopf's conduct in this matter. We all learned to love Dr. Hopf at Bad Boll, and regard him as a Christian of sincere conviction who is concerned about the truth of the Lutheran Confession. We even share his apprehension concern-

(Continued on page 60)

13 LUTHERAN CHURCHES

Total Number of Souls: 20,504,111

Ev. Luth. Provincial Church of Saxony
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Hahn

Ev. Luth. Provincial Church of Hannover
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Lilje

Ev. Luth. Provincial Church of Schleswig-Holstein
Bishop: Dr. Halfmann

Ev. Luth. Church in Bavaria
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Meiser

Ev. Luth. Church in Thuringia
Provincial Bishop: Mitzenheim

Ev. Luth. Provincial Church of Mecklenburg
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Beste

Ev. Luth. Church in the State of Hamburg
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Schoeffel

Brunswick Ev. Luth. Provincial Church
Provincial Bishop: Erdmann

Ev. Luth. Provincial Church in Schaumburg-Lippe
Provincial Bishop: W. Henke

Ev. Luth. Provincial Church in Wuerttemberg
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Haug

Ev. Luth. Church in Oldenburg
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Staehlin

Ev. Luth. Church in Luebeck
Provost: Johannes Pautke

Ev. Luth. Provincial Church in Eutin
Provincial Provost: W. Kieckbusch

Members of the United Evangelical
Lutheran Church of Germany
(VELKD)

Not Members of
VELKD

TWO REFORMED CHURCHES

Total Number of Souls: 416,274

Provincial Church of Lippe
Provincial Superintendent: Prof. Lic. Neuser

Ev.-Reformed Church in NW Germany
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Hollweg

ORGANIZATION

THE SYNOD

Legislative Organ. Consists of 100 members elected by the synodical organs of the Member Churches and 20 members called by the Council.

Term of Office: 6 years.

Meets as a rule once a year.

Directive and administrative
Consists of 12 members
Term of office: 6 years

OFFICES OF THE CHURCH

THE CHURCH

Hannover.

Temporarily

Berlin Branch

CHURCH ARCHIVE OFFICE OF THE EKiD
Hannover

JOINT CHURCH WORK AND

Relief Work of the EKiD: Central Bureau: Stuttgart
Central Bureau East: Berlin W 15

Central Committee for Inner Mission: Bethel Bielefeld

German Evangelical Mission Council: Hamburg

Gustavus Adolphus Work of EKiD: Assenheim bei Friedberg/Hessen

Evangelical Student Congregation in Germany: Business Office: Stuttgart

EKID
CHURCH IN GERMANY
Member Churches with a total of 39,833,434 souls
SHIP

11 UNITED CHURCHES
Total Number of Souls: 19,113,049

Evangelical Church in Berlin-Brandenburg
Bishop: Dr. Dibelius

Evangelical Church of the Church Province of Saxony
Bishop: Dr. Mueller

Evangelical Church of Westphalia
President: Wilm

Evangelical Church in the Rhineland
President: Dr. Heinr. Held

Evangelical Church in Hessa and Nassau
President: Dr. Niemoeller

Evangelical Church in the Electorate of Hesse-Nassau
Bishop: Dr. Wuestermann

Evangelical-Protestant Provincial Church of Baden
Provincial Bishop: Dr. Bender

Evangelical Church in Pommerania
Bishop: Dr. von Scheven

United Protestant Church of the Palatine
President: Dr. Stempel

Evangelical Provincial Church of Anhalt
High Church Councilor: W. Schroeter

Evangelical Church of Silesia
Bishop: Hornig

THE EVAN. CHURCH OF BREMEN
Total Number of Souls: 416,559

Evan. Unity of Brethren
Direction of Bad Boll
Bishop: Dr. F. Baudert
Roughly 8,000 Members

The Evang. Church of Bremen
President: F. Donandt
Not to be reckoned among the member churches
of the EKID, since it has not yet ratified the
Constitution.

OF THE EKID

COUNCIL
of the EKID.

COUNCIL OF THE EKID

CHANCELLORY

Abian Gmuend.
Charlottenberg.

CH STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE EKID

OS OF ACTIVITY OF THE EKID

THE CHURCH CONFERENCE

Advisory and Preparatory Organ. Participates in Election of
Council and Legislation.
Organized by representatives of the governing body of Member
Churches.

THE CHURCH'S FOREIGN OFFICE
Frankfort-on-the-Main

ECUMENICAL CENTER
Frankfort-on-the-Main

Youth Work of the EKID:
Imperial Union of Evangelical Young Men's Association of Germany
Kassel-Wilhelmshoehe
Imperial Union of Evangelical Young Women of Germany
Berlin-Dahlem

Men's Work of the EKID:
Main Place of Business: Offenbach-on-the-Main

Women's Work of the EKID:
Business Office: Frankfort-on-the-Main

(Continued from page 57)

ing the next developments, which may seriously curtail movements in the territorial churches in their direction toward the Confession. It is not without some oppression that we also view the future relations of EKID and VELKD and what can still arise therefrom in the way of complications and concessions to error. Just for this reason we regret it most deeply when sound theologians like Sasse and Hopf leave their territorial churches with accusations of denial of the truth and apostasy. If ever, then matters have now reached a point where you and the men about you who love the heritage of the pure doctrine have the right to reckon with the support of every theologian and every pastor who is concerned about the truth. (The truth is quite different. Dr. Sasse and Pfarrer Hopf had for years, along with others, protested the unionism of the VELKD and the EKID. They should have been able to count on the support of leaders like their own Bishop Meiser. But these men failed them utterly. The false union of the VELKD and of the EKID was finally *consummated*. Not only should Romans 16, 17 be applied to such a situation, but true Lutheranism is actually helpless in such a situation, its confession being rudely and effectively stifled, as shown by the treatment accorded Pfarrer Hopf, who was ousted from his church by Bishop Meiser. — P. H. B.)

The longer I study the documents, the less can I feel the courage to condemn the EKID as a makeshift of the Evil One. Whoever has studied the first drafts and the writings of Hopf and others that appeared a year ago and then notes that in important points such changes were made in the wording that the way into the new union (*Verband*) was blocked to all unionism as much as possible; whoever then considers conditions and rightly pictures to himself the necessity of a union of evangelical churches — the threatening political situation, the currency distress, the housing distress, refugee problems, the diaconate, marital confusion, the question of public schools — sees enough occasion for a union (*Bund*) like the EKID. (See also Hopf, "Zur Frage nach dem Wege" etc., p. 15.) The elections in January (Bethel) were the first test as to whether Lutheranism has sacrificed anything of its strength and unity.

You refer to the 'unpleasant' attitude of the Free Churches. I agree with what Hopf wrote about the Free Churches a year ago. But there is happening in Germany among the Free Churches what has always been the temptation of those who have become the victims of separa-

tion movements. (*Aber es geschieht in Deutschland bei den Freikirchen, was jeher die Versuchung war, denen Austrittsbewegungen zum Opfer gefallen sind.*) I think of the Haugeans in Norway, of American fundamentalist groups among Presbyterians. They cannot rid themselves of the feeling of wellbeing of the 'little flock' of martyrdom, — genuine as it may have been. Changes in the situation make no impression. One is afraid — like our little Norwegians here in our country — lest one no longer suffer shame for Christ's sake in the conflict with the Evil One. When God's Spirit has created something new, so that, as a hundred years ago in Norway, the confession again gains ascendancy and faithful pastors can be called, — the Haugeans must continue their prayer meetings as at the time of Rationalism. I mean to say that what you are experiencing belongs in a familiar category.

A few days ago Vice-President Harms left for Europe to spend a few months in Germany. If occasion happens to arise, you may let him read this letter. We are good friends, and I believe you will cherish his acquaintanceship.

I am taking the liberty of sending a copy of this letter to Bishop Lilje and Bishop Dibelius; also to Pastor Kressel.*

Yours with respectful greetings,

THEODOR GRAEBNER.

* (Bishop Dibelius, President of EKID; Bishop Lilje, Vice-President. — P. H. B.)

❁ The Ousting of Pfarrer Hopf by Bishop Meiser

As Told by Himself

On May 18, 1949, I was ousted as Lutheran pastor at Muehlhausen, near Bamberg, Germany, by the Lutheran Bishop Meiser of Munich, Bavaria. The elders of the congregation had as its representatives energetically declared only fourteen days before that they wanted to keep me as their pastor. They emphasized that they could not judge the conflict at issue theologically. But they were convinced that contention against the new EKID (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* — Evangelical Church in Germany) was based in the Lutheran confession. They spoke on behalf of many members of the congregation who were likewise unshaken in their confidence in my performance of my office. When my removal as pastor of the congregation was proclaimed and immediately put into effect, the representative of the authorities of the (Bavarian

State) Church did not want to deal at all with the board of elders of the congregation. Nevertheless, I succeeded in having the elders of the congregation called in. They protested anew, but then yielded to power, and suffered the injustice. As a consequence I immediately had to deliver the official books and the key of the church to the commissar whom Bishop Meiser had sent here as pastor. I declared, however, that I could not recognize the ouster. I further declared that I would also in the future officiate as the rightful pastor of the Lutheran congregation at Muehlhausen in case anyone should desire this service. Hereupon I was invited by one of the elders of the congregation to conduct a service in his home on Rogate Sunday. Since then we have regularly met there in the name of Jesus Christ in a small peasant room every Sunday and festival day. About forty members of the congregation regularly come to my services. Bishop Meiser's commissar declared from the pulpit that the congregation must consider me an "erring brother" and that my future official acts "would be invalid and could not be recognized." In this statement we see a blaspheming of Christ, the living Lord, who in the Word and in the Sacrament deals as the truly present One also when His means of grace are administered outside the Bavarian State Church.

Was my contention against the EKiD necessary? Did things have to come to this severe pass between Bishop Meiser and me? Together with Dr. Herman Sasse and other Lutheran theologians of a confessional tendency I have since 1933 untiringly fought against unionism within the Lutheran State Church. We always made the requirement that our Church would have to free itself from the fetters of the unionistic constitution which had in 1933 been forced on it by the government of Hitler and which our bishops, alas, had at that time approved. In 1945 the hour had come for a good building anew on the ground of the Scriptures and the Confessions. We immediately and continuously fought for this. But our bishops, alas, were from the beginning ready for compromise. They indeed brought about a union of the Lutherans and organized the VELKD (*Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands*), the "United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany." But at the same time they participated in a wholly contrary union of Lutheran, Reformed, and United (*Uniert*) Churches. Thus there came into being the EKiD (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*), the "Evangelical Church in Germany." The Reformed and United people understand it as a Union. The Lutherans emphasize its character as a federation. Both tendencies are found in

the constitution (*Grundordnung der EKiD*), which was decided on at Eisenach on July 13, 1948, and later ratified by all provincial churches. Already the name "Evangelical Church" proves that the tendency to Union in the EKiD is stronger than the thought of federation. The authority of the EKiD and its boards is decisive for all participating churches. Concerning pulpit fellowship it has been decided that the ministry of the Word is not to be denied in any congregation to a preacher of a different confession. As concerns altar fellowship the principle is in force that also adherents of different confessions are to be admitted to the Lord's table everywhere. The celebration of Holy Communion itself in each congregation corresponds to the old confession as heretofore, but there are no barriers anymore against the admittance of the heterodox. This unionistic practice existed long ago also in the Lutheran provincial churches nearly everywhere. Only a few clung to a strictly confessional practice. But now the condition which prevailed hitherto has become the regular order. The stipulations of the constitution concerning the Confessions show the same picture. Within the EKiD the various churches should indeed retain their Confessions and "let them become effective." But, aside from this, each church should "harken to the testimony of the brethren." With this, a wholly new relationship has come about in place of the old rejection of false teaching. What was formerly rejected and fought as erroristic teaching is now counted as the "testimony of the brethren" and should also become effective. The fight against erroristic teachers is to be waged in common by the EKiD. Whoever accedes to this can within the EKiD no longer fight against Reformed and Unionistic teaching of error. For, Reformed and United people are themselves to help decide as concerns right and false doctrine. Hence they can no longer be opposed as erroneous teachers by the Lutherans. Whoever joins the EKiD thereby refrains from divinely ordained separation from all who adhere to false teaching. The Lutheran bishops are by their Union and Federation made permanently impotent for contention against erroneous teaching. They have curtailed and weakened their own Confession. What has already hitherto been actually (*de facto*) unionistic and contrary to their Confession has now come to be also legally (*de jure*) recognized and protected. That is why we fought against joining the EKiD. Like Luther, Paul Gerhardt, and the Lutheran Free Churches, so we also are contending against this anti-Scriptural Union.

Should I have given up my office in Muehlhausen and forsaken the congregation which I

had served since 1936? I would have done this if the representatives of the congregation had been satisfied with this. But they supported my fight. It was jointly with the board of elders of the congregation that I had protested, through a "protestation of rights," against joining the EKID. We declared that we could not recognize the decision of the Bavarian State Synod. We emphasized that, through joining, the Lutheran Confession had been violated and the constitution of the State Church had been broken. Now the ecclesiastical authorities tried by many means to influence the congregation at Muehlhausen. Even the opposition of people within the congregation who understood nothing at all of the Confession but who wished another pastor was made use of. Through a representative of the authorities of the Church we were confronted with the threat: "You must step out of the State Church! You will then lose your nice church and likewise your parsonage and the congregational property! This matter, however, will cost you a great deal; for you will have to pay very much for the salary of your pastor if you follow him!" Nevertheless the opposition was not overcome. Even though many members of the congregation did not take part in the contention, they were also for the future satisfied with my conduct of my office. For this reason I remained bound in my conscience to the congregation at Muehlhausen then as before. At the end of January I declared: I shall not give up my office of my own free will; however, I can no longer recognize the authorities of the State Church as a Confessionally Lutheran church government; I shall remain bound to the authorities of the State Church, who have bound themselves to the EKID, only in externals, that is, in matters of external administration. I made the proposal that we be peacefully dismissed from the association of the State Church; then we could have kept church, parsonage, and property. We wanted to live alongside of the State Church in the same manner in which the Reformed congregations in Bavaria exist alongside of the State Church. This declaration led to my ouster. Bishop Meiser earnestly endeavored to cause me to reach a different conclusion. I should in any case in his opinion also then have left my congregation. But he could never refute my Confessional argumentation. Also, he could not prove any agreement between the constitution of the EKID and the Formula of Concord. He always emphasized again and again: "You should not give up your convictions, but represent your position within the State Church; but you must

conform to its order and acknowledge the church authorities!" I could not yield. Therefore I was ousted, contrary to the will of the congregation. Thus division came about within the congregation. For the time being I am living in the parsonage as a renter for a consideration and receive 72 per cent. of my regular salary. (Pastor Hopf was placed "in den Wartestand," on the waiting list; on October 10 notice was served on him that he would shortly have to leave the parsonage. Different quarters have now been assigned him through civil authorities in another little — Catholic — village, far enough from his congregation to make it difficult to serve it. The Bolsheviks in Russia are not the only ones to resort to such dastardly methods toward destroying Christian congregations. — P. H. B.)

Everyone will admit that conflict of a pastor with authorities is a trying thing. But in such a case genuine Lutherans must always ask: What is absolutely important and necessary now according to divine right? Is submission to human authority really the most important thing? Dare a pastor who is officiating in accordance with the Confession be removed from office and a faithful congregation split for such a purpose? Or is the most important thing always the gathering of a congregation through Word and Sacrament? If this is the case, then conflict between pastor and authorities can also be endured as long as the one thing is done in the congregation which is needful for eternal salvation. Bishop Meiser has reached a contrary decision. For the sake of the Union Church in Germany he has made a great sacrifice. He has so far as he is concerned destroyed the genuine office in Muehlhausen and scattered the real congregation. I was prepared to maintain a connection with the State Church in external matters. I had to experience that this is impossible when a bishop and a synod of the State Church have bound themselves to a constitution which is contrary to the Confession. I am the more thankful that I am in pulpit and altar fellowship with the Lutheran Free Churches in Germany.

We sincerely beg our Lutheran companions in the faith outside our country: Do not remain neutral in the conflict for the Lutheran Confession! We are waiting for your public testimony against the unionism of the German Lutheran State Churches. Whoever neglects this testimony can neither fight effectually against unionism in his own country. "Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity!"

FRIEDRICH WILHELM HOPF.

❶ The Success of Our Free Church Brethren in Germany

While "official" Missouri has been meeting with State Church Lutherans at Bad Boll in Germany and encouraging them to go on with their unionistic endeavors (not to mention the frustration of possible unity here at home through ill-advised concessions and compromising of the truth), our brethren of the Ev. Lutheran Free Church have, largely under the leadership of Rev. Wm. Oesch, editor of the one-time *Crucible*, been pursuing their own program of true unity among Lutherans in Germany. And God has granted them victory once and again as a blessed fruit of their faithful testimony.

Already in 1948 we could report that the Ev. Lutheran Free Church had succeeded in achieving doctrinal unity with the Synod of Breslau ("Ev. luth. Kirche Altpreussens") and that the two bodies, of about equal size, had established fraternal relations with each other. (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, April, 1948; February, 1949.) Later we could report that there was similar prospect of fellowship, based on full unity in doctrine and practice, between these two bodies and the Independent Ev. Lutheran Church in Baden, Hessen, and Niedersachsen. (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, February, 1950.) This union in the truth was actually consummated in November, 1949, bringing together nearly all of the Free Churches of Germany.

Included in stipulations of unity was the requirement not to have anything to do with the EKiD, "directly or indirectly," the latter meaning through entanglement with the Lutheran State or Provincial Church, such churches being members of the unionistic EKiD. The basic principle on which fellowship was consummated was stated in the words, accompanied by pertinent proof-texts: "A faithful Lutheran Church can cultivate altar and pulpit fellowship only with such churches as are one with it in the whole doctrine of the Word of God and whose practice is also in accord with Scripture and Confession."

All of which adds up to one simple fact: Anyone who will but take the trouble to study the documents involved in these unions and see how many serious differences and difficulties were honestly faced and removed must give glory to God and confess that the Truth can and will still gain victories if we but have the faith and courage to use it to that end. Are we willing to do that?

Truth goes marching on. Are we willing to join in this march?

P. H. B.

❷ A Plea for Direct Relief to Our Lutheran Brethren in Europe

(Gal. 6, 10)

Our first and foremost obligation in extending relief to the needy in Europe will always be and remain that of help to our own needy brethren, which today means members of the Lutheran Free Churches in Germany which are affiliated with us, as well as our brethren in Finland, France, and elsewhere in Europe. For, after all, the Bible does say: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, *especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*"

The writer's own congregation has, ever since it has been possible at all to extend post-war relief to Europe, sent money, books, food, and clothing directly to European brethren. This has over the years proved itself the best possible method of extending help that we could think of, and we have compared all other methods of which we have any knowledge at all. The surpassing excellence of this method has also been emphasized by men who have been in Europe, among these one who recently addressed the congregation of the undersigned. We cannot recommend this method too highly. Hundreds of letters testify to the good it has already done, spiritually as well as physically.

Among those whom we would single out for a larger measure of support there is first of all the seminary of our Free Church brethren at Oberursel. Parcels of books, food, and clothing can be addressed to Rektor W. M. Oesch, Luth. Theol. Hochschule, (16) Oberursel/Taunus, Altkönigsstrasse 50, U. S. Zone, Germany.

Next we would mention Pfarrer Wilh. Friedr. Hopf, whose struggles have been mentioned elsewhere in this journal. Under the greatest difficulties, Pfarrer Hopf and his faithful band of followers are laboring to establish an independent congregation in Bavaria affiliated with our Free Church. Besides the necessities of life, Pfarrer Hopf and his people are in need of a church edifice and a parsonage. His address is: Pfarrer Friedr. Wilh. Hopf, (13a) Nackendorf (Oberfranken), Post Hoechstadt an der Aisch, Bayern, (U. S. Zone) Germany.

In this connection we may say that we shall on request be glad to suggest the best way to send money both to our seminary and to Pfarrer Hopf as well as to other intended recipients.

And finally, we suggest that the reader take his *Lutheran Annual 1950*, look up the addresses

of various pastors of our Free Churches in Germany and elsewhere in Europe, listed on pages 170-172, remember them in your relief work, and write them for addresses of further especially needy families in their midst.

We wish to add that we are making this appeal entirely of our own accord. It has not been requested nor even suggested by any of those named. Indeed, we believe that they are, all of them, too modest to make any such request or suggestion, despite their great need and the privations and great difficulties and self-denial under which they are faithfully laboring with the greatest fortitude to build THE CHURCH. That is the final question after all, and you can have a part in this work also through your relief program, in all of which you are asked to remember the promise of the Church's Lord: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." (Mt. 25, 40.)

P. H. B.

© What Our Readers Say

"Your position is very important for the spiritual strengthening of our European Free Churches. We want to remain true to the Word of God as revealed in Scripture and confessed in the Lutheran Confessions, and oppose all sorts of unionism and indifference. Unfortunately the representatives whom the Missouri Synod has so far sent to Europe have done more toward strengthening the unionistic and indifferentistic Landeskirchen than they have toward strengthening our small but faithful Free Churches. . . . I see plainly that we shall have no peace as long as we are on this earth, but the victory cannot be obtained through strife." — Pastor, European Free Church.

"It is still extremely difficult to obtain postal money order permission for subscriptions in the United States. Yet I do not wish to be without your paper, as I am thoroughly convinced of the necessity of a strenuous fight for the maintenance of our doctrinal heritage and truly Lutheran position. Sometimes I wish that the *Confessional Lutheran*, instead of wasting much space and time in following slippery opponents into all sorts of labyrinths of details, would remain in the center of the fight, which is the doctrine of the Church and Unionism, — the abominable misuse of the truth that synodical organization is of human right, by inference from that fact that synodical cooperation with errorists then, too, is of human right and permissible.

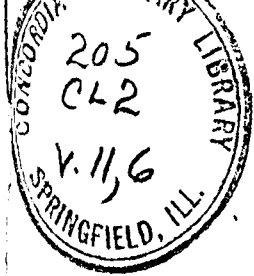
"Let us all pray that this year's convention in Milwaukee may prove to be a fighting synod, unwilling further to table the ticklish problems which, if permitted to continue unsettled, will spell the ruin and disruption of our dear Church." — Another pastor of one of our Free Churches in Europe.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above letter is, of course, written on the basis of first-hand experiences and impressions of affairs in our Church gained abroad. A member and executive in high standing of our Free Church in Germany has written us that he is not betraying any confidences when he says that not only all of the pastors associated with us who met at the little "Bad Boll" in Alsace last year, but all of our churches in Germany reject Dr. Graebner's doctrine of the Church, presented in his lecture, "The Church, and Churches" (*Kirche und Kirchen*), which is in our hands in its original typescript form. As time permits, we hope to bring the contents of this lecture, with its false doctrine of the Church and of Church Fellowship, to the attention of our readers. Suffice it to say for the present that Dr. Graebner, for one thing, entirely leaves out of account the fact that the confessional fellowship to which we are committed as a synod is of divine right, — divinely enjoined, both as to its positive aspects and as to its negative aspects ("Avoid them!," Rom. 16, 17). He creates the belabored impression that any synod, like our own, is merely an external organization (over against the concept of a church in the proper sense of the word), rather than an external, confessional fellowship. From there he goes on to conclude that any such synod can "cooperate" with any other synod or "Church," this being but an external and wholly indifferent matter. The Word of God is quite conspicuous by its absence throughout his lecture; reference to and quotations from liberal theologians abound in it and supply its direction. — P. H. B.

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

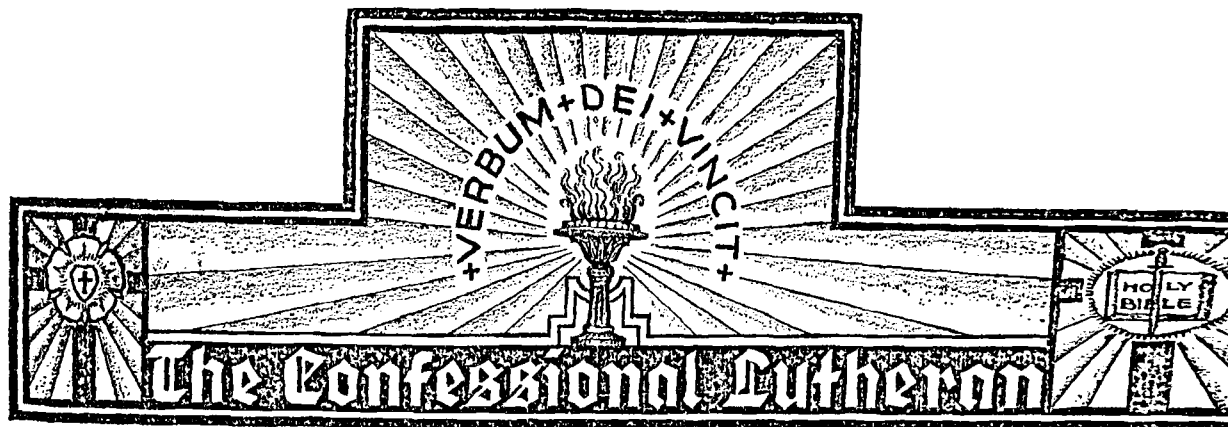
THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD



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PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF LUTHERAN UNITY

MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same ment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is de against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a co. tion of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remain God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

JUNE, 1950

NUMBER

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● Scriptural Aims for the 1950 Convention of the Missouri Synod

The Scriptural aims which we should pursue at the 1950 convention of our Synod have been laid down in its Constitution (Art. III): "The objects of Synod are: 1. The conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4:3-6; I Cor. 1:10) and a united defense against schism and sectarianism (Rom. 16:17)."

Everything that is contrary to, or in any manner not in conformity with, these objectives should be scrupulously avoided. Every true Missourian should in a wholly evangelical manner

seek to restore the unity of the true faith, trine, and confession in our Synod, realizing only as God's grace grants the accomplishment of this objective can Synod in the future as in the past be a truly orthodox body, in which orthodox congregations, holding to the Scriptural principles of the historic Missouri Synod, can continue to hold membership. We should speak plainly that every one can understand, calling a spade a spade. We should never compromise even a iota of the truth of God, but, speaking the truth in love, strengthen the weak, and in the spirit of meekness seek to restore those who have departed from the truth. We should insist that evangelists

THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN

Published in the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism

By the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau

(One Dollar Per Year)

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Articles intended for publication are to be addressed to the office of publication: Box 73, Clinton, Iowa.

Subscriptions (\$1.00 per year) are to be sent to Rev. Eldor Mueller, 910 Second Avenue, Sterling, Illinois. Please notify us promptly of any change of address.

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discipline must prevail within the Missouri Synod and that the synodical officials, entrusted with certain responsibilities, may not unevangelically evade their responsibility on the plea of technicalities, but promptly and without respect of persons exercise evangelical discipline whenever necessary.

At the Jubilee convention of our Synod in 1872 Dr. Walther said: "We have had to battle with the spirit of religious unionism, which is pervading all Christendom like a pestilent disease, throttling all love for pure truth at its very inception. We have battled with a new type of Lutheranism which has been corrupted through rationalistic, unionistic, sectarian, and Romanizing teachings, principles, laws, and practices.

Yes, we have had to contend with false spirits in our own midst."

Today it is especially the false, Romanizing doctrine of the Church with its concomitant evils, sacramentalism, moralism, secularism, indifferentism, and unionism, that is raising havoc within our midst. Those same false teachings, principles, and practices against which our fathers successfully battled, have now wormed their way into the very ramparts of Missouri and have taken possession of one or the other of its citadels.

Shall we now lay down our arms and make peace with error? Shall truth and error stand side by side within our midst? Where that occurs, truth must perish.

In this age of universal apostasy from the truth, will Missouri, after enjoying the special grace and blessing of God for a hundred years, finally fall away from the one true faith?

Will Missouri by its failure to exercise evangelical discipline now forfeit its orthodox character?

We are determined that by the grace of God this shall not happen. We are determined that by the grace of God the truth which we have received from the fathers shall be handed down by us to our children in an unadulterated form. We are determined that by the grace of God not a single iota of the truth of God shall be compromised for the sake of outward peace.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." (Formula of Concord.)

Our aims for the 1950 convention should therefore be: (1) to do everything in our power under God to prevent the Missouri Synod from forfeiting its orthodox character; (2) to restore unity of the true faith, doctrine, and confession in our midst; (3) to insist that brethren erring from the truth of God's Word be dealt with in an unprocrastinating, evangelical manner. D.

● Seeing Ourselves As Others See Us

In our April issue we called attention to the rejection as "not Lutheran" and hopelessly bad sense" by Editor Ruff in the (ULC) *Lutheran* of the doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod concerning Holy Scripture, as confessed in its *Brief Statement*, that the Holy Scriptures "contain no error or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters."

In the April 5 issue of the *Lutheran*, Editor Ruff has discussed the Common Confession of committees of the ALC and of the Missouri Synod under the heading "Missouri Compromise." Summarizing this latest "union" document, which is to be acted upon by the Missouri Synod at its convention in June and by the ALC somewhat later, Dr. Ruff says: "It didn't try to solve the old problems." He illustrates what he thus says by the doctrines of the Word, of Conversion and Election, and of the Antichrist. Of the doctrine of the Word as presented in the Common Confession Dr. Ruff says that the statement concerning that doctrine "is almost identical in wording with the 'Pittsburgh Agreement' adopted by the United Lutheran Church." And then he adds: "That agreement made by the ULC with the American Lutheran Church in 1940, was officially interpreted as not an acceptance of the 'verbal inspiration' doctrine." Because of its obvious importance we are publishing Dr. Ruff's discussion of the "Missouri Compromise" in its entirety below.

In the *Lutheran Standard* of the American Lutheran Church, April 29 (p. 6), Editor Edw. W. Schramm emphasizes that Dr. Ruff "affirms that the teaching of the Missouri Synod on the inspiration of the Bible has encouraged some to be 'Bible believers' instead of Christ believers — and" *Editor Schramm goes on to say*: "he feels compelled to warn against *this danger*." (Our emphasis.) Editor Schramm in conclusion refers to this as a "courageous and constructive service."

In its issue of February 15, the *Christian Century*, commenting on the Common Confession released at that time, under the heading "Missouri Lutherans Thaw a Little," concluded: "It remains to be seen whether this February thaw will carry over into the mild weather in June, when the triennial convention of the Missouri Synod meets in Milwaukee."

We do not know what makes the *Christian Century* predict (metaphorically) mild weather at the convention of the Missouri Synod in June. We rather expect that the Common Confession

may meet with a cold reception at that time. We trust and pray to God that it will. And to that end we shall labor with all our might as God in His grace gives us strength to do so. For we want no Missouri Compromise, and we shall have no part in anything of that sort. We shall, as Confessional Lutherans, and in keeping with the constitutional purpose and object of the Synodical Conference, continue to bend our efforts toward the uniting of all Lutherans into one orthodox church, so help us God!

P. H. B.

● Missouri Compromise

Last month several church papers made public the new confession of faith which had been drafted by committees of the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. Churchmen on both sides were hopeful that this document would provide a basis for pulpit and altar fellowship between the two churches.

The 2,000-word statement was a mild conclusion of theological debates that had thundered back and forth between these two church groups for nearly a century. It didn't try to solve the old problems — it buried them.

One question which had disturbed the peace between Missouri and the Iowa Synod (now part of the American Lutheran Church) was whether the Roman Catholic Pope is the Antichrist (described in I John 2). Iowans in the 50s of the last century said it doesn't matter very much whether or not a Lutheran believes the Pope is the Antichrist. Missourians said it did.

Antichrist Settled

As recently as 1931 when the Missouri Synod prepared a "Brief Statement" of its beliefs, it declared that "we teach that the prophecies of the Holy Scripture concerning the Antichrist have been fulfilled in the Pope of Rome and his dominion."

Even on such a doctrine, acknowledged to be "non-fundamental," the Missouri Synod said that complete agreement was necessary before church fellowship could be established.

In the new Lutheran confession made public in March, the Antichrist doctrine is played down. It states merely: "Among the signs of (Christ's) approaching return for Judgment, the distinguishing features of the Antichrist, as portrayed in Holy Scriptures, are still clearly discernible in the Roman Papacy, the climax of all human usurpations of Christ's authority in the Church."

Who is Converted?

Missouri Synod theologians had always been up against a tough problem in their doctrine of conversion. Nobody will be saved, they said, unless God has given them power to believe.

They were guarding against the non-Lutheran doctrine that people can win salvation through some effort of their own. But they had to avoid the Presbyterian doctrine of predestination, according to which some people are scheduled for damnation regardless of anything they may try to do about it.

There had been heavy skirmishing with the Ohio Synod (now part of the American Lutheran Church) on the questions of conversion and election. In a burst of humility the Missouri Synod said in 1931 in its "Brief Statement" — "As to the question why not all men are converted and saved, seeing that God's grace is universal and all men are equally and utterly corrupt, we confess that we cannot answer it."

The new doctrinal statement prepared by Missouri and ALC professors and pastors clears up the conversion question in two sentences: "The sinner's conversion takes place when God brings the contrite sinner to faith in Christ as his Savior. This change of heart with respect to sin and this reliance upon Christ for salvation from sin is the work of God the Holy Spirit, without any cooperation whatsoever from sinful man."

Doctrine of the Word

Sharply and aggressively the Missouri Synod had stated its doctrine of "verbal inspiration" of the Scriptures in its "Brief Statement" in 1931. "Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters."

This point has been emphasized by the official Missouri paper, the *Lutheran Witness*, in 1940. "Anyone who denies even a fact so remote from the doctrine of salvation as, let us say, the fact that David slew Goliath or that Ruth was a Moabitess cannot have fellowship with us, for the simple reason that such a person denies what is plainly stated as a fact in the Bible."

Gone from the new American-Missouri confession was that sort of definition of verbal inspiration. The confession says: "Since the Holy Spirit by divine inspiration supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word, therefore we acknowledge the Holy Scriptures in their entirety as the inspired Word of God. . . . We therefore recognize the Holy Scriptures as God's inerrant Word . . ."

This statement is almost identical in wording with the "Pittsburgh Agreement" adopted by the United Lutheran Church. That agreement made by the ULC with the American Lutheran Church in 1940, was officially interpreted to the ULC as not an acceptance of the "verbal inspiration" doctrine.

Problem Ahead

It was not clear this month whether acceptance of the compromise doctrinal statement by both the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod would lead in the near future to fellowship between the two churches.

Such fellowship would mean that ALC pastors could preach in Missouri pulpits. Letters of transfer of church members would be accepted by congregations of both denominations. People of the two churches could pray together publicly without censure from their officials.

The Missouri Synod does not at present extend this fellowship to any churches of the National Lutheran Council or of the Lutheran Church Federation. It recognizes as its equals in doctrinal purity only the small group of churches of the Synodical Conference in the United States and a few groups in Australia, Brazil, Germany, and elsewhere.

No Success

The American Lutheran Church had previously reached theological agreement with the Missouri Synod on the basis of statements approved in 1938. It was then stated by the Missouri Synod that fellowship with the American Lutheran Church could not be permitted as long as the ALC was also in fellowship with churches not doctrinally acceptable to Missouri.

The ALC had pulpit and altar fellowship with the Augustana Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church, and others of the American Lutheran Conference. It has since then extended "selective fellowship" to the United Lutheran Church, which means that pastors use their own judgment about intercommunion and exchange of pulpits according to situations in the local communities.

The (ULC) *Lutheran*, April 5, 1950, pp. 7-9; edited by Dr. G. Elson Ruff.

● Our Springfield Seminary

A few years ago we were motoring through Springfield, Illinois, and naturally we wanted to see our Theological Seminary. We were shocked by what we saw. Hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars are being spent to build our colleges and our St. Louis seminary; but Springfield is being treated worse than a step-child.

Christ says: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that He will send forth laborers into His harvest," Matt. 9:37, 38. Our Springfield Seminary should be built up as rapidly and as adequately as possible. The minimum entrance age (now 20 years) should also be lowered, so that more high-school graduates may be induced to enter that institution and prepare themselves for the ministry of the Gospel.

When the Board of Higher Education in 1944, comparing the preparatory college—St. Louis system with the Springfield system, contended that the "end product" of the former is "of superior quality" — we seriously question the truth of that assertion. We never studied at Springfield, but we base our judgment on twenty-five or more years of contact with Springfield graduates. And is it absolutely necessary, in order to be a successful pastor or missionary, to have the full training now offered in the preparatory college—St. Louis system?

We, of course, are heartily in favor of making it possible for an individual to obtain a senior college education and to be able to do post-graduate work in our own circles, and not to be forced to look for such training elsewhere. But let us be on our guard, lest we set the requirements for the Gospel ministry so high that many who would otherwise be gained for the ministry become discouraged. Not to mention that the Springfield curriculum can be developed to whatever point may be desirable.

Let us own our child, and make decent and proper provision for it! Let us do what should be done to build up our Springfield Seminary!

D.

● The Six Days of Creation

The Official Position of Our Synod

Our Synod expressly teaches that God created the world in six days. It expressly rejects the modern false notion that the world was created in six long periods of time.

"We teach that God has created heaven and earth, and that in the manner and in the space of time recorded in the Holy Scriptures, especially Gen. 1 and 2, namely, by His almighty creative word, and in six days. We reject every doctrine which denies or limits the work of creation as taught in Scripture. In our days it is denied or limited by those who assert, ostensibly in deference to science, that the world came into existence through a process of evolution; that is, that it has, in immense periods of time, developed more or less out of itself. Since no man was present

when it pleased God to create the world, we must look for a reliable account of creation to God's own record, found in God's own Book, the Bible." (*Brief Statement*, Par. 5.)

Regarding the six days of creation Dr. Pieper, *Dogmatik*, I, p. 572, has correctly said, "This space of time is neither to be reduced for pious reasons to a mere moment — to set off God's omnipotence; Athanasius, Augustine, Hilary — nor to be expanded for impious reasons to six periods of undetermined duration — to reconcile Scripture with the pretended 'established results' of science; so nearly all modern theologians. Against misinterpreting (umdeuten) the days as periods of creation it is decisive that the days are divided into evening and morning. This compels us to accept a day of twenty-four hours."

Dr. Graebner's Latest Aberration

Contrary to the above official position of our Synod, Dr. Theo. Graebner on September 27, 1948, wrote to a layman of the Augustana Synod as follows: "Regarding the length of 'day' in the first chapter of Genesis, there is no agreement even among orthodox (? D.) theologians. Some will read the Hebrew text as indicating that a natural 24-hour period is indicated in this chapter, while others hold that even as the seventh day in which God 'rested' is a long period of time, extending to the present, even so the other six days may be regarded as periods each. This implies no concession to the evolution theory." (Quoted in the *Lutheran Outlook*, May, 1949, p. 142.)

We ask: If this is not to be a concession to the so-called *theistic* evolution theory, then why not stick to the simple clear words of Scripture? In Gen. 1:4, 5 we read that God "divided the light from the darkness" and "called the light Day and the darkness Night." Time was to begin on earth. God therefore separated the light from the darkness and ordered that light and darkness (Day and Night) should henceforth follow each other in regular order. He also defined the unit of time which He had thus ordered. "And the evening and the morning were the first day." Ever since that first day the regular recurrence of darkness and light marks the period of one day, as we now reckon it in twenty-four hours.

In Gen. 1 God plainly says that He created the world in six days of twenty-four hours. Over against this clear Word of God Dr. Graebner insists that God did not talk plain enough. He may have meant six days of twenty-four hours, or He may have meant long periods of time; we do not know.

To the best of our knowledge, Dr. Graebner has never before tampered with this truth of Scripture.

In previous issues of the *Confessional Lutheran* it has been pointed out how Dr. Graebner questions the clarity of Rom. 16:17, and therefore denies what God plainly commands. Now he also questions what God says in Gen. 1. What will be the next truth of God which this teacher of future pastors of our churches will compromise?

The Fatal Course of Unionism

Here we see the fatal course which many unionists pursue. In order to establish a mere outward union they will compromise one truth of God after the other. Having once questioned and compromised the clear Word of God in one point, they soon question and compromise another point. This goes on and on until the whole Bible becomes uncertain to them. In the end it may even happen that doubt concerning their own justification assails them, and, unless God in His mercy prevents it, they will then lose saving faith and with it their salvation.

Evangelical Discipline

The question which inevitably arises in this connection is: What will the officials of Synod do regarding this and other doctrinal aberrations which are now everywhere appearing in our midst? Are we merely to continue having Elders-discipline, or have we reached the stage where we shall have no discipline at all?

Synod has given its President the specific duty: "The President has the supervision regarding the doctrine and the administration of a) All officers of Synod; b) All such as are employed by Synod; c) The individual Districts of Synod; d) All District Presidents. It is the President's duty to see to it that all the aforementioned act in accordance with Synod's constitution, to admonish all who in any way depart from it, and, if such admonition is not heeded, to report such cases to Synod. The President has, and always shall have, the power to advise, admonish, and reprove. He shall conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the Districts of Synod." (Constitution, Art. XI, *Synodical Handbook*, p. 7f.)

The last words of the latest issues of the *Confessional Lutheran* read: "Evangelical Discipline Must Prevail Within the Missouri Synod."

The real purpose of evangelical discipline is not, as some imagine, to get rid of an offending and erring brother, but to regain him for the truth, if possible. Through the Apostle, God says: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted," Gal. 6:1.

The President of Synod has solemnly sworn to perform the duties of his office. The members of Synod expect him to perform such duties conscientiously. And love for the erring brethren also requires that he perform this work of love.

May God give the President of Synod a special measure of His grace and grant him faith and courage conscientiously to seek to restore the erring brethren in our midst, and finally, when necessary, suspend obstinate and persistent errorists from synodical fellowship.

D.

❖ May Two Church Bodies Have Fellowship Even If Agreement in All Non-Fundamental Doctrines Has Not Yet Been Reached?

An Editorial Note

In the July, 1948, issue of the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Dr. Engelder said, "The proposition: 'It is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines' is not in accord with Matt. 28:20. Luther and the Formula of Concord disavowed it." (P. 524.)

To this assertion the following "Editorial Note" is opposed: "If the statement criticized means or implies that unity in all non-fundamental doctrines need not be striven for, or that non-fundamental doctrines may be treated like open questions, it certainly must be rejected. But if it merely states that two church bodies may have fellowship even if agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines has not yet been reached and that here on earth full agreement in all non-fundamental teachings is not attainable, a thought is expressed which Dr. Walther voices repeatedly. Cf. f. i., his Foreword for *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 14 (1866), p. 66f."

Dr. Walther does not voice the thought here attributed to him, either at the given reference or elsewhere. What he does say is that *absolute* unity (a unity that knows no error, even though only momentary, and out of weakness, such as fanatics envision in a millennium dreamed of by them) is not attainable on earth. The mistaken statement of Dr. Arndt also involves a wrong conception of Dr. Walther's "*fundamental*" unity, which is possible, and necessary for true confessional fellowship, that is, unity with regard to the whole "*fundament*" of our faith, which includes the *WHOLE Scripture as the source or organic FOUNDATION of Christian doctrine*, a differentiation between fundamentals and non-fundamentals *here* being out of place. This con-

ception has frequently been falsely rendered "unity in fundamentals," etc., as opposed to non-fundamental doctrines. So. *c. g.*, in *C. T. M.*, 1946, p. 494, Ed. Note. Drs. Arndt and Graebner are the chief offenders in this matter. However, since this matter has already been repeatedly treated, we would at this time comment mainly on the above stated question.

Iowa's Position on Open, Non Church-Divisive Questions

Dr. Walther tells us that Iowa originally wanted to include among the open, "non church-divisive" questions even such fundamental points as the Doctrine of the Church, of the Office of the Ministry and the Power of the Keys, of the visible Coming of Christ, of a particular resurrection before Judgment Day, etc., etc. "All these things were therefore regarded by the Iowa Synod as open, non church-divisive questions. And whether *such evidently* fundamental points belong to the category of open questions constituted the original state of controversy between Missouri and Iowa. . . . But the latter, instead of permitting the issue to remain there, chose to shift the controversy to the field of *non-fundamentals*. We are indeed willing to suffer it to be so, since we also exclude non-fundamental matters from the field of open questions when they are clearly contained in the Word of God." (*L. & W.*, 14, p. 108, footnote. This footnote is omitted in *C. T. M.*, 1939, p. 262. Other important items are also omitted in the *C. T. M.* translation.)

No Doctrine Clearly Revealed in Scripture an Open Question

Over against the Iowan position that non-fundamental doctrines are open, "non church-divisive" questions, Walther emphatically stated: "*We can regard and treat as an open question no doctrine which is clearly taught in God's Word or which contradicts God's clear Word, though the same may appear to be or actually be one ever so subordinate, and lying ever so far off from the center of the doctrine of salvation, in its periphery.*" (P. 66.)

To guard this assertion against misconception, Walther then points out (1) that church fellowship must not *AT ONCE* be terminated with an *individual* as soon as he becomes guilty of doctrinal aberrations; (2) that even a grievous error in a *whole Church* does not in itself necessitate separation from that Church *as long as that Church has not hardened itself in such error*; (3) that a *simple* Christian who errs even in a secondary *fundamental* doctrine need not *necessarily* be excluded from an orthodox church body.

This is the section from the Foreward referred to by the "Editorial Note" and it is here that Walther is falsely supposed to have voiced the thought that two church bodies may have fellowship even if agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines has not yet been reached.

If An Individual Errs

Dr. Walther says, "Hereby we now, in the first place, by no means want to say that *as soon* as any error militating against God's clear Word becomes apparent in any *member* of the Church — that church fellowship must then at once (*alsobald*) be terminated with him. A more terrible fanaticism, destructive of the unity of the Church which is precisely intended thereby, is certainly hardly conceivable." (P. 66.)

If church fellowship is terminated *at once*, as soon as a person becomes guilty of any doctrinal aberration (*irgendein Irrtum*), — that is truly fanatical. Such fanaticism destroys the intended unity of the Church.

If A Whole Church Errs

Dr. Walther continues, "Hereby we also furthermore by no means want to say that where in any ecclesiastical *fellowship* any error not subversive of the foundation of faith, but militating against God's clear Word still prevails, the same has thereby already lost the character of a Church with which an orthodox Christian can nurture fellowship. To admit that *every individual true member of the Church* can err and at the same time deny that the *whole true Church* can err, would be an outrageous contradiction of which only a papist can make himself guilty. As long as a Church therefore does not *harden* itself in its error, its error, even a more grievous one, does not form a separating gulf, least of all when such a Church has already taken the road back to unity in the full truth." (P. 66f.)

Here Dr. Walther clearly states that even an orthodox Church can err, even as Missouri erred in adopting the since withdrawn 1938 resolution on union, and as some within our circles hold that it erred again in 1947 in not expressly rejecting the false doctrine contained in *A Statement*. We earnestly believe that the Missouri Synod *as such* has not yet hardened itself in error, and that the failure of the responsible officials and boards of Synod in true love to deal properly with those whose doctrine and practice is not in accord with Scripture and who are thereby causing division and offense contrary to Apostolic doctrine in our midst does not in itself constitute a reason for separation on our part *at this time*. However, if the Missouri Synod *as such*, would either expressly *or by its inaction* declare that such devi-

ation from the clear Word of God is a matter of liberty or indifference, then, as we shall point out later, we could no longer regard the Missouri Synod as a true Church, nor treat it as such.

If A Simple Christian Errs in a Secondary Fundamental Doctrine

Dr. Walther continues, "With the declaration given above we finally also do not want to say this, that among the members of the Church no distinction is to be made and that there must be required of all an equally correct judgment also regarding such points of the doctrinal content of the Bible as do not belong to the dogmatic foundation." (Note this *dogmatic* foundation. Here it is proper to distinguish between "fundamental" and "non-fundamental" doctrines.) "It can certainly happen that a *simple* person, because he is not able to comprehend the correctness and necessity of a consequence, may deny even a secondary *fundamental* article unto his death, without it being possible because of mere persistent denial or only because of clinging to a secondary fundamental error to exclude him as a heretic from the communion of the Church; how much more will this be the case with respect to such points of doctrine as do not belong to the fundamental articles of the Christian faith at all!" (P. 67f.)

Here Walther clearly treats of *bearing with* persons who are so *simple* as to be unable to grasp the nature of their error (even of a secondary *fundamental* article) or the consequence of their position. A distinction must be made among church members. One may well bear a persistent, life-long denial of a non-fundamental doctrine, yes, even of a secondary *fundamental* doctrine, in a *simple* Christian. But that dare not be the case in those who would be teachers in a church or in a whole church body.

THAT IS WHAT DR. WALTHER SAYS IN THIS SECTION OF THE FOREWORD OF *LEHRE UND WEHRE*, XIV. BUT, PRAY, WHERE DOES WALTHER HERE VOICE THE THOUGHT THAT TWO CHURCH BODIES MAY HAVE FELLOWSHIP EVEN IF AGREEMENT IN ALL NON-FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES HAS NOT YET BEEN REACHED? IT IS NOT THERE. HENCE THIS CITATION FROM THE FOREWORD DOES NOT PROVE THE CONTENTION OF THE "EDITORIAL NOTE."

But Dr. Walther does teach that two church bodies may have fellowship even if disagreement exists, not only in non-fundamental but also in *fundamental* matters, *provided* those erring *err in weakness* and reveal the disposition to submit unconditionally to the Word of God. However,

if an individual or a church body persistently adheres to false doctrine, even if it be only in a non-fundamental matter, then such persistent denial of the clear Word of God must finally result in a termination of fellowship or a separation.

The last thought we shall take up first.

Those Who Persistently Err in Non-Fundamental Doctrines

On this point Walther writes, "Also a non-fundamental error, if it is contrary to the clear Word of God, is by all means not to be treated as a heresy, but by patient instruction it must be shown to be untenable, be refuted, opposed, and criticized. However, if a Church has exhausted all means to bring one who errs in this respect to the acknowledgment of the divine truth and his adherence to the respective error evidently is not due to insufficient intellectual understanding, and hence through this non-fundamental error it becomes manifest that he consciously, stubbornly, and obstinately contradicts the Word of God and that accordingly through his error he subverts the organic foundation of faith, then such erring person, like all others who persevere in mortal sin, *must no longer be borne with, but fraternal relations with him must by all means be terminated.* The same applies also to a *whole church communion* which is in this manner unorthodox. *It is true that in this life an absolute unity in faith and doctrine is not possible, and no higher unity than a fundamental one can be attained. But this by no means excludes that in a Church non-fundamental errors, contradicting the clear Word of God, must not be attacked, if they become manifest, and that a Church cannot be regarded as a true Church and cannot be treated as such, if it either makes such dogmatical non-fundamental errors a part of its confession and, with injury to the organic foundation, in spite of all admonition, stubbornly clings to them or in a unionistic fashion and in a spirit of indifference insists that a deviation from God's clear Word in such points is a matter of liberty and indifference.*" (L. & W., 14, p. 107.) We may here add that according to Walther a communion which destroys the unity of the Church *through* its adherence to a non-fundamental error is not to be regarded as a sect, but as a schismatic communion.

Those Who Err in Weakness

But it is an altogether different matter if a person or a church body errs in weakness. Walther did not expect a dogmatically correct understanding of Bible-teaching in every one with whom he fellowshiped. "But the question will

be asked, Does it not frequently happen, yes, is it not the universal lot of men, that they err in *weakness*, and are we not to receive those that are weak in the faith, and must therefore not every error of weakness, especially if it does not subvert the foundation, be excluded from the category of church-divisive errors, and therefore by all means be reckoned among open questions? We reply: An error due to lack of understanding or precipitancy, hence to *weakness*, dare by no means ever be treated as a heresy and can never be church-divisive and *indeed, be the same ever so gross*. Accordingly we see that even those were not excluded from the Church who owing to weakness in their understanding even taught the fundamental error: 'Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved,' Acts 15:1. But although in the case of an error caused by weakness the *erring brother* is to be borne with, the *error* itself must never be tolerated by the Church, even if it appears insignificant and not dangerous, if it opposes a clear Word of God. *Such an error may therefore never be treated as an open question. . . .* Hence it is certain that, since *all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is *profitable*, the Church may not adulterate or relinquish anything contained in Holy Scripture, but must earnestly hold to every Biblical truth, no matter how insignificant it may appear, and must oppose every unscriptural error, should it seem ever so unimportant." (*L. & W.*, 14, p. 105-107.)

As soon as there reveals itself in an individual person or in a church-body the *disposition* to submit unconditionally to the entire Word of God and to hold nothing that militates against the foundation of the Christian faith, be it the real or the dogmatic or the organic foundation, we gladly extend to every such person the fraternal hand and are also cordially willing and ready to have church fellowship with such a body. This, however, is our attitude and practice, not because we consider any doctrine clearly revealed in God's Word an open question which one may either affirm or deny and concerning which there is liberty of decision, but because we know that there are *errors of weakness*, as there are *sins of weakness*, and that a Christian may harbor even a fundamental error in his mind, without subverting the foundation in his heart, not to mention that he who errs in a non-fundamental point must not necessarily destroy the foundation of faith. Nevertheless we consider it our duty to censure as error, refute, oppose, contend against, and reprove whatever error becomes known to us in the teaching of those who wish to be our brethren, whether this pertains to a fundamental or a non-fundamental doctrine of the Word of God. By taking this course, we

merely follow all faithful servants of God, from the prophets and apostles down to the most recent recognized faithful ministers of the Church. The result, of course, is that the Church never for a long time enjoys peace and that precisely the orthodox Church usually presents the appearance of a body torn by internal dissensions. But this, far from being an indictment of a servant of God and of the Church, is rather an indication and seal that the servant of God is faithful, and it gives the Church the assurance that it belongs to the Church Militant." (*L. & W.*, 14, p. 111.)

Here it is proper to cite the reception of the Minnesota Synod or of the Michigan Synod into the Synodical Conference (cf. *Lutheran Witness*, 1946, p. 192), or the reception of the little Alpha Synod (cf. *Our Colored Mission*, p. 49ff.).

When members of an orthodox Lutheran church body permit themselves to be looked upon as *weak* brethren and we can rightly regard them as such, then we gladly extend to them the hand of Christian fellowship. However, when the members of such unorthodox Lutheran church bodies are determined to hold fast to false doctrine (be it in a fundamental or a non-fundamental matter) and seek supremacy or equal rights for such false doctrine, then Rom. 16:17 stands as a barrier against all church fellowship.

That was the position of Dr. Walther regarding errors of weakness and lack of understanding in non-fundamental *and* fundamental matters. And that is the position of the Missouri Synod to this day.

But that is not the position of the American Lutheran Church.

The Sandusky Declaration

The "Editorial Note" rejects the thought that non-fundamental doctrines may be treated like open, non church-divisive questions. But that is the only way in which the American Lutheran Church has ever understood its Sandusky declaration. Dr. Reu, for example, after referring to that declaration says, "Whoever thinks that he must, on account of non-agreement in non-fundamentals, sever or reject church fellowship with brethren who bow as sincerely as he does to the Word of God and who desire above all else to accord supreme authority to the Scriptures, should be made to understand that he separates himself from his brethren on account of something which has nothing to do with our salvation and stands far out in the periphery of Christian doctrine." (*In the Interest of Lutheran Unity*, p. 38.) Again, after expressing his Church's willingness to study the "four or five points" with the Missouri committee, he declared, "but the never concealed supposition was that these

points did not belong to the church-divisive points." (Quoted in *C. T. M.*, 1942, p. 66.)

The Basic Fault of the "Editorial Note"

The basic fault of the "Editorial Note" is that without any qualifications or reservations it declares that two church bodies may have fellowship even if they have not as yet reached an agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines. Thereby it places the non-fundamental doctrines into a category in the matter of church fellowship where they do not belong.

Every persistent denial of any clear Word of God — be it in non-fundamental or fundamental doctrines — is divisive of church fellowship. No error, even that which is held in weakness or lack of understanding, dare ever be regarded as an open, "non church-divisive" question. As Walther put it, the Church may bear with an erring brother, but it dare not tolerate the error itself or treat it as an open question.

A Continuation of the "Open Question" Controversy

In the "Editorial Note" we have in brief the false position of the Statementarians, as set forth in Point 11 of *A Statement*, over against the true Scriptural position of Walther and of Luther and the Lutheran Confessions, as presented by Dr. Engelder.

The present controversy in our Synod on this point is but a continuation of the former controversy between Missouri and Iowa.

Iowa's theology triumphed over the Ohio Synod in 1930. It has now wormed its way into the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Will it also conquer the Missouri Synod?

May God grant that the anti-Scriptural, liberal theology of Iowa may not prevail in our midst!
D.

ON THE UNION FRONT

New York Lutheran Society

The unionistic activities of the Lutheran Society, Inc., continue. Meeting after meeting features pastors of any and all Lutheran bodies, including Statementarian Missourians, promiscuously intermingled in giving invocations, addresses, and benedictions.

Further data from Lutheran Society bulletins and letters, news accounts, and other sources, include the following:

Announcement was made in January, 1949, that the Missouri Synod's newly appointed

Director of the Department of Public Relations, the Rev. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann, had become a member of the Lutheran Society. Our readers will note that support of this Society is, at best, a type of selective fellowship, condemned by Synod assembled in 1947 (*Proc.*, p. 519-520). The Society's activities presuppose joint religious work and worship without settlement of doctrinal differences, and are unionistic. The man who above others represents the Missouri Synod before the "public" ought to exemplify, personally and officially, the doctrines of Synod as found in its *Brief Statement*, not omitting paragraphs 28 and 29.

Public Relations — New Type

Climax of the Lutheran Society's 1949 season was the "All-Lutheran Reformation Rally" "in commemoration of the 300th Anniversary of Lutheranism in New York," held at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel on October 23. Pastors of various N. L. C. bodies offered the opening prayer, received the offering, and pronounced the benediction. Hymns were sung, presumably in the spirit of joint worship. The speaker for the occasion was a member of the Missouri Synod clergy, for the first time in the history of the New York All-Lutheran Reformation affairs, in the person of the Director of the Department of Public Relations of the Missouri Synod, the Rev. Oswald C. J. Hoffmann. The subject: "Luther's Leadership for the New World." A layman "presided" over the "rally."

Here we have joint prayer and pulpit fellowship with heterodox Lutherans on the part of a Missouri Synod official.

We realize that the New York All-Lutheran Reformation doings used to be called "services" and are now called "rallies." The pronouncement which declared Missouri Synod participation in the latter to be perfectly right, in distinction from the former "services," was made by a Synodical District President. (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, 1949, p. 38-39.) An analysis of said pronouncement shows it to be merely an assertion or rendered opinion, without any attempt at support from Scripture (or Synodical resolution).

Service or Rally?

There is supposed to be a difference between a "service" and a "rally." It is seriously maintained by some if there is no actual "liturgy," then an affair is not a "service" but a "rally," and that joint worship with the heterodox, if it does not take place in a liturgical service, cannot be called unionistic. One good brother, in trying to arrive at a decision as to whether this New York affair was a "service" or a "rally," asked the question: "Was there a Scripture lesson?"

We refuse to become befuddled by this shifting of labels. We should like our readers to try to convince themselves that there is any essential difference between joint prayer and pulpit fellowship led by a clergyman, and joint prayer and pulpit fellowship presided over by a layman.

Eyes on the Elected Watchman of Synod's Doctrine and Practice

Here is another incident which must be either accepted by silence, or rejected publicly. The offender is an appointed official, who by his own printed statement is responsible to the President and is to comply with the latter's directions. We hope that the President will act in this case, and that his action will go beyond the writing of a letter of reprimand. The time to quit retreating before the onslaught of those who defy the Scriptural fellowship regulations of the Missouri Synod is now, if not sooner.

Those of Statemantarian mind have now arrived at the *second stage* in their strategy, in that they demand *equal rights* for their erroneous teachings on Christian fellowship by seeking to *practice* according to these views with impunity. This bold action can be met only with action, and the Constitution of Synod requires that the President take the lead in such action. (Art. X and XI.) By action we mean action that is geared to rid the Missouri Synod effectively of error, by forthright rejection of error and disciplinary measures against offenders. If the stage is ever reached when it will have become impossible to accomplish these things, then the primary reason for the existence of the Missouri Synod will have gone up in smoke. Cp. Constitution, Art. III, Object No. 1.

An A. L. C. Official on the "Common Confession"

Under a full-page caption "Unity Conferees Reach Accord," in an article entitled "Local Church Leaders Comment," the *Detroit Lutheran*, February 3, 1950, p. 1, brings the following:

"In a true sense of the term the agreement reached by the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and the Committee on Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church is not 'news.' It is simply stating in more comprehensive form and more simple language what was subscribed to by the American Lutheran Church in convention assembled in 1938 and what has been reaffirmed by it in subsequent conventions.

"I rejoice that this most recent doctrinal agreement has been unanimously adopted by the two committees. I see no reason why it should not

be accepted by the entire American Lutheran Church. It is my fervent hope and prayer that its acceptance on the part of both bodies involved may result in an ultimate cooperation in external matters not only between the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church, but among all Lutherans, for such cooperation is indispensable to the future of Lutheranism in America and in the entire world."

(Statement by) "Norman A. Menter, D. D.
President, Michigan District
American Lutheran Church."

The A. L. C. convention action to which Dr. Menter refers is reported in the Missouri Synod's *Proceedings*, 1941, p. 277, as involving the following points:

"a) The statement that it is neither possible nor necessary to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines;

"b) The declaration that the American Lutheran Church will not give up its membership in the American Lutheran Conference;

"c) . . . the sentence 'We believe that the *Brief Statement* viewed in the light of our *Declaration* is not in contradiction to the Minneapolis Theses'."

Destiny of the N. L. C.

Looking ahead, Executive Director Dr. Paul C. Empie of the National Lutheran Council prognosticated: "Out of the death of the National Lutheran Council will be born a great church. That will be its greatest fruit. For though when the unity comes it must come from the bodies themselves, the great testing ground making it possible will have been the program of the National Lutheran Council. Therein lies the significance of the years of getting acquainted, of hopes and discouragement, of study and experimentation, of trial and error, of prayer and practice." (*The National Lutheran*, March, 1949, p. 4.)

Note well the end in view, and the means toward that end.

A. V. K.

❶ Review of Publications

Thine Forever. Daily Devotions, following Luther's Small Catechism. Collated and Edited by August G. Suechting. 383 pages, 4½×6½. The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio. \$1.75.

The purpose of this devotional book is to serve as "a suitable gift to the newly confirmed, a book that would keep alive the teachings received during instruction, a book written for them expressly that would stimulate loyalty to the church and their Lord." Its brief medita-

tions, one for each day of the year, each covering a single page, are based on Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism, supplemented by a number of kindred subjects related to the Christian life (the Seven Words from the Cross, the Beatitudes, etc.). 294 contributors are listed, each of whom prepared a single meditation, with the exception of one, who prepared those not otherwise credited in the index, pp. 379-383. Among these are not only pastors of the American Lutheran Church, whose publishing house is responsible for this book, but also of other churches of the American Lutheran Conference and of the National Lutheran Council, inclusive, *c. g.*, of the United Lutheran Church.

Some of the peculiar tenets on toleration of which the American Lutheran Church evidently still insists receive expression in this publication. Among those we call attention to the following:

On page 269 it is said that in the Lord's Supper we receive Christ's "glorified" body. On page 261 Christ as "the living bread which came down from heaven" (received spiritually through the word of the Gospel outside the Sacrament) and His actual body and blood given us in the Sacrament do not seem to be properly distinguished. On page 270 the Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper comes right out when it is said: "Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life.' Here He offers Himself to us in a very special way so that *by faith* He is really present when we eat of this bread and drink of this cup." (Our emphasis. The author of this particular meditation seems to be a member of the ULC who, according to page 5, prepared all the devotions not otherwise credited at the end of the book.)

Page 51 brings a meditation under the Fourth Commandment on "Obedience to church" in which unqualified obedience to one's church seems to be demanded; and on page 252 under the Office of the Keys ("Who exercises this power? The ministers of Christ") it is said: "If we would grow in grace and favor before God and among men we must submit to the church and her discipline, we must obey the rules which govern her. Our school report card is evidence of our willingness or unwillingness to fit into the school program. The teachers exercise authority by virtue of their office. So also, we must give account of our conduct to the minister whom God has placed over us." Both of these meditations are by pastors of the ALC.

On pages 110 and 41, under Creation and the Third Commandment respectively, false doctrine concerning the Sabbath comes to light. In the former instance it is said: "On the sixth day creation was completed. The seventh day God rested from His creative activity. *And He for-*

ever after designated that day as one of rest for man." (Our emphasis.) To which we raise the question: Are we indeed not complying with a "designation" of God when we do not give Saturday over to rest? In the latter instance it is said: "The law of God decrees that one day in every week all men *must* cease their normal work and *must* worship Him." (Emphasis in original.) To which we ask: Are Christians indeed to be told that they are transgressing the law of God and living in sin, of which they must repent and for which they must seek forgiveness, if they do not cease their "normal work" "one day in every week"? How many good Christians would have to be plagued with a bad conscience by such teaching! Its connection with the Gospel (also "non-fundamental" doctrines are connected with the central doctrine of faith, though indirectly) should readily be seen also by unlettered laymen. This is teaching neither the Law nor the Gospel rightly. It belongs, not to the teaching (the marks) of the Church, but to the teaching of Sectarianism. (Augsburg Confession, Art. VII.) We can have no part in it. "We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity." (Formula of Concord, *Trigl.* Edit., p. 1095.) For that reason we cannot establish fellowship with any church in which such doctrine is persistently taught. For the same reason we cannot recommend the above book, except only to such as have a sufficiently developed habit of exercising their senses for the proper discernment of good and evil in matters of doctrine. Among these we would hardly reckon the average recently confirmed.

P. H. B.

● What Our Readers Say

"Blow the trumpet, and warn the people; he that taketh warning shall deliver his soul," Ezekiel 33, 3. 5. — Pastor, Minnesota.

"Please keep the *Confessional Lutheran* coming. We need it on account of the 'Lutheran Weakness'." — Nebraska pastor.

LOOK TO YOUR SEMINARIES!

"A Christian can not and dare not idly look on when the holy temple of the Lord is being laid waste by men to whom, because of the respect they enjoy and their learning, young Christians are entrusted for instruction, and who misuse their office to confuse and to destroy in their students the faith in which they have been baptized."

Prof. R. Lange, in *Lehre und Wehre*, 25 (1879), p. 113.

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

“We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ.” — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

JULY, 1950

VOLUME 7

IN THIS ISSUE: The Infallibility of Every Word of Scripture — Do Lutherans Within the National Lutheran Council Really Deny that the Bible is the Word of God? — To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice — The New Theology of Confusion Emanating from St. Louis — The Chicago Study Club, April 25 and 26, 1950 — On the Union Front — Review of Publications — What Our Readers Say.

● The Infallibility of Every Word of Scripture

Our Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod in its Brief Statement of its doctrinal position confesses: "Since the *Holy Scriptures are the Word of God*, it goes without saying that they contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in *all their parts and words the infallible truth*, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, John 10, 35." (Par. 1.)

Over against this, the proposed Common Confession of Faith reads: "We therefore recognize

the Holy Scriptures as God's inerrant Word, and this Word of God alone shall establish articles of faith (Cf. Smalcald Articles, Part II, Art. ii)." (Par. V.)

The word "therefore" is important, for it refers us back to the preceding words. Why do we recognize the Holy Scriptures as God's inerrant Word? Because, as the Common Confession states, the Holy Spirit having by divine inspiration supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word, the "Holy Scriptures *in their entirety*" are the inspired Word of God. (Our emphasis.) These words, on the basis of the background of the A. L. C., a committee of

THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN

Published in the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism

By the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau

(One Dollar Per Year)

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Articles intended for publication are to be addressed to the office of publication: Box 73, Clinton, Iowa.

Subscriptions (\$1.00 per year) are to be sent to Rev. Eldor Mueller, 910 Second Avenue, Sterling, Illinois. Please notify us promptly of any change of address.

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which is party to the document, compel us to understand the Common Confession as ascribing inerrancy only to the Holy Scriptures "in their entirety." In the light of circumstances confronting us, it would be a forced interpretation and contrary to the context, to understand the Common Confession as ascribing inerrancy to *every word* of Scripture.

This is in full agreement with the Declaration of the A. L. C.: "By virtue of inspiration, i. e., the unique operation of the Holy Spirit, by which He supplied to the holy writers contents and fitting word, the separate books of the Bible constitute an *organic whole* without contradiction and error, and are rightly called the Word of God." (*Proceedings*, 1938, p. 221-2.)

Note that in its Declaration the A. L. C. says that the separate books of the Bible are *rightly called* the Word of God. Missouri confesses that the Scriptures are not only rightly called, but that they *are* the Word of God. To understand this difference, it must be remembered that within the A. L. C. a distinction has been made, for instance, between the Word of God in Jeremiah, and Jeremiah's reflection on that Word of God. (Cf. *In the Interest of Lutheran Unity*, p. 56f.) The former is supposed to be God's Word; the latter is said to be *rightly called* the Word of God. (Cf. Also the Pittsburgh Agreement between the A. L. C. and the U. L. C., which says that the Bible "is the *history* of God's revelation for the salvation of mankind, and of man's reaction to it.")

Applying this difference to the words of the Common Confession: "We pledge ourselves to teach all things taught in the Holy Scriptures, and nothing but that which is taught by God in the Holy Scriptures" (Par. V.), we find that this can be understood as including *everything written* in Scripture, every word of it. But it can also be understood as referring merely to what *God* is supposed to have *taught* in Holy Scripture, namely, His revelation for the salvation of mankind, *not* the supposed reaction of man to such revelation. In fact, there is such a large hole here, that even someone like Editor Ruff of *The Lutheran*, who called the words of the Brief Statement, that the Scriptures "contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters" "hopelessly bad sense," could walk through it and subscribe to the Common Confession of Faith.

Also in this important matter the proposed Common Confession of Faith does not confess the full truth of God and places no barrier in the way of its denial. D.

Do Lutherans Within the National Lutheran Council Really Deny That the Bible Is the Word of God?

We shall for once let one of their own number answer the above question.

A recent book, *The Doctrine of the Word*, by Joseph Sittler, Jr. (United Lutheran Church), published by the Muhlenberg Press, has been reviewed in *The Lutheran Student Pastor*, Oct. 1949, by Dr. O. G. Malmin, editor of the *Lutheran Standard* ("Evangelical Lutheran Church") as a guest reviewer. Following is the review of Dr.

Malmin, himself in fellowship with the National Lutheran Council.

"Author of this little book is one of the younger theologians of The United Lutheran Church in America, professor of Systematic Theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Chicago. Five lectures delivered under the Knobel-Miller lectureship of the United Lutheran Church in America are the basis for the book.

"Dr. Sittler gives the following statement as to his purpose in delivering these lectures: 'These lectures are an effort to open a subject; they are informed by no notion that they can, or ought to try, to close it. Their purpose is to direct the attention of the Church of the Reformation to the nature of that Word of God which brought her into existence and forever sustains her.'

"In pursuit of his purpose, the author makes the following development: Chapter one, 'The Structure of Lutheran Theology,' is an orientation into the background of Lutheran theological belief. The chapter is, by and large, splendid. However, the particular predilection of Sittler makes itself plainly felt, namely, that everything in the content of Christian faith is to be looked at from a subjective point of view. For example, in the section of that chapter which deals with the Word of God, we find this statement: 'If one declares that the Word of God is the Scriptures and means by that declaration to assert an uncomparable relationship between the action of God and a recorded complex of history, then the statement will stand. But if, as is commonly understood, the identification of the Word of God and the Scripture means to equate the Living Word of God with the words of the Bible, a manifestly wrong statement is made.' It seems to the reviewer that Sittler has adopted the tenets of the so-called 'theology of crisis' to the point where personal reception and experience come to be almost entirely the criteria of authority in revealed religion.

"In chapter two the author attempts to develop the idea that, historically, the reformers did not consider the Bible to be the Word of God. Necessarily, then, he must go on to show how this conception of the Bible came about. This he does in chapter three in which he attempts to develop the theory that it was the age of orthodoxy which thus tried to force the Word of God into the mold of the letter of the Bible. This he characterizes as 'a caricature of its rightful position.' Chapter four is 'The Disintegration of a Caricature.' Here the effort is to show that the end of the old view of the Bible as being the Word of God has had to come because of attacks made upon what the author considers an entirely

untenable theory in the first place. The 'caricature' has 'disintegrated' fast since the close of the First World War.

"One looks to the concluding chapter to find something definite which the author wishes to put in place of that which he has attempted to destroy. The last chapter is completely disappointing, however, and one comes away from reading this brief book with the feeling that the author has done reasonably well in demolishing the old view without being able to substitute anything dependable for it.

"Frankly, to the reviewer this little book seems one of the most disturbing that he has read from an American Lutheran source. From childhood, we have believed that the Bible is the Word of God. Now — and that from within the circle of American Lutheranism — the attempt is being made to take away this firm foundation for our faith and life. Nor is it, evidently, only Sittler who has this view of the Bible. Recent books by Dr. Kantonen and Dr. Bergendoff seem to hold exactly the same view of Scripture. What it all seems to come down to is that experience is the final authority in things religious.

"Nor do we feel that the author has made a good job of it. While there is a great deal of logic in the first four chapters of his book, yet *one feels that it is entirely human reason which dictates the thing, and that even many of the facts which he adduces are certainly subject to grave question.* When one is through with the four chapters one does not feel that the professor has made a water-tight case.

"It is chapter five, however, that really demonstrates how empty this, for Lutheranism, new theory regarding the Bible is. When a person has attempted to take away from a fellow-believer that which has been the basis for his faith, then the one thus deprived has the right to say, 'Now that you have deprived me of that upon which I thought I could depend, I have a right to demand that you give me something equally good or better in its place.' There Sittler fails completely. We cannot understand how anyone can be satisfied with such a purely subjective view of the Word of God.

"We think that most of those who read this book will feel that the Bible as the Word of God still stands secure, in spite of Sittler's book."

We want to underscore the words of Dr. Malmin in which he says: "Frankly, to this reviewer *this little book seems one of the most disturbing that he has read from an American Lutheran source.* From childhood, we have believed that the Bible is the Word of God. Now — and that from within the circle of American Lutheranism — the attempt is being made to take

away this firm foundation for our faith and life." And again when he calls attention to the fact that it is evidently not only Sittler who has this view of the Bible: "*Recent books by Dr. Kantonen*" (also of the ULC) "*and Dr. Bergendoff*" (Augustana Synod) "*seem to hold exactly the same view of Scripture.*"

One sees the hollowness, the mockery, of the constitution of the National Lutheran Council, as well as of the United Lutheran Church and of the Augustana Synod, when these bodies permit such public denial by leading men in their midst. In the Preamble of the Constitution of the National Lutheran Council acceptance by the participating bodies of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God is declared to be part of the doctrinal basis of the Council. But how meaningless that becomes in the light of such tragic denial as is shown to exist above in the teaching of professors within these bodies, in their seminaries, in publications which issue from the presses of their publishing house!

Speaking of Dr. Kantonen's book, *The Resurgence of the Gospel*, Mikkil Lono has said, in the *Lutheran Outlook* (American Lutheran Conference), May, 1949: "According to Kantonen's concept of the Word, the written Word is not God's Word at all. It is merely the words of men, but which God uses to convey His Word directly to the heart, somewhat, I suppose, as when God uses the message of a fallible preacher as a vehicle for His life-saving Gospel. The Word of God is in the Bible, but the written Word of God, or the Bible, is not the Word of God. By the Word of God Dr. Kantonen seems to mean some sort of spiritual intuition that God gives through the Bible. At least in modern times, this concept seems first to have been presented in this form by Emil Brunner." In speaking of "this new attack upon the Written Word," Pastor Lono calls attention to a letter by A. V. Neve in the March issue of the *Lutheran Outlook* (American Lutheran Conference) "which clearly is inspired by Dr. Kantonen's book." The *Lutheran Outlook* published similar articles by Pastor Neve in its Dec., 1948, and Sept., 1949, issues. (Cp. CTM, Nov., 1949, p. 869.) All of which goes to show that the situation, as regards Holy Scripture, is quite as bad within the American Lutheran Conference as it is within the National Lutheran Council generally.

In this connection we cannot help calling attention to the fact — which we shall do over and over again if necessary — that despite all such evidence to the contrary, Lutheran consciousness and confessionalism has been becoming better and better all the while within the American Lutheran Conference and the National Lutheran

Council according to the fanatical dreams of such unionists as Dr. Theo. Graebner in our own midst.

Let's be sober; let's be vigilant. For our adversary, the devil, is about, seeking whom he may devour. And he is mighty active toward that end within the "agency," the fellowship, of the National Lutheran Council, — from any sort of entanglement with which whatsoever may God in His mercy graciously preserve us!

P. H. B.

✻ To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice

1 Sam. 5, 22

Two series of conferences at Bad Boll in Germany have now been held, the first in 1948, and the second in 1949. Various reports of these conferences have been published. Some of these try to justify the mode of Missourians in dealing with modernistic Lutherans within the EKiD, — the "Evangelical Church in Germany." But the conviction which we gained from reports on the first series of such conferences in 1948 has been strengthened by reports on the 1949 conferences: It is not the voice of faithful old Missouri that has been expressed by the invitation of these conferences, but the voice of the so-called "44," who stand for a weak-kneed and diluted brand of Lutheranism.

We know of no way of putting in the proper light the attitude of Missourians who are directing the Bad Boll policy than by comparing it with the sin of Saul, King of Israel, who partly fulfilled the command of the Lord, and tried to excuse what was lacking in his obedience by pointing to his "sacrifice unto the Lord," intimating that his lack of obedience flowed from the noblest intentions.

The Lord had charged King Saul with a definite commission: "Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy *all that they have* and spare them not." It was the intention of God to exterminate the Amalekites on account of their revolting abominations, and Saul was to execute the divine judgment. But instead of fulfilling the command of the Lord, Saul spared Agog, the king of the Amalekites, and the best of the sheep and cattle, and destroyed only that which was vile and refuse in his sight. Then came the word of the Lord unto Samuel: "It repenteth Me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following Me and hath not performed My commandment." The first word which Saul spoke when Samuel approached him was: "Blessed be thou of the Lord; I have performed the commandment of

the Lord." And when Samuel took him to task for sparing the best of the cattle contrary to God's command, Saul was by no means ready to admit his sin, but rejoined that the people had done this "for the sacrifice unto the Lord."

This, then, was the sin of Saul for which the Lord rejected him. After partly fulfilling the command of God, he tried to cloak his disobedience by using as a pretext his "sacrifice unto the Lord." But this hypocrisy was duly unmasked by the scathing words of Samuel: "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

The Lord has committed unto us His saving Gospel and has inculcated on us the sacred duty of keeping it pure and unadulterated. As to those who in any respect depart from the faith once delivered unto the saints, we have the clear direction of the Lord to avoid them. (Mt. 7, 15; Rom. 16, 17; 1 John 4, 1; 2 Cor. 6, 14-18.)

The Twofold Error of Bad Boll

Now there are especially two things in which representatives of the Missouri Synod in their dealings with modernistic Lutherans in Germany have been disobedient to the clear command of the Lord. The first is their fraternizing with such as deliberately cling to fundamental errors. By their so-called "Christocentric" attitude toward the Scriptures these Lutherans subvert the foundation of the Christian faith and open the door to many other errors. For this attitude means nothing less than that they accept only a part of the Scriptures, — namely, these texts which in their opinion are related to Christ and His work, but not those in which no relation to Christ is evident to them. Hence the only right way to approach them would be to deal with them as with erring Lutherans who can not be acknowledged as brethren in the faith as long as this error is not cleared up.

We are told: "But Missourians confessed the truth concerning the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures, and there was not the slightest idea of altar fellowship with those German Lutherans. On the contrary, it was generally understood that, as long as those Lutherans did not accept the full truth, altar fellowship was out of the question. So did they not obey the word of the Lord?" But this was exactly the sin of Saul, that he *partly fulfilled* the Lord's command and thought that his partial fulfillment should be accepted as real obedience to the Lord. Genuine obedience to the word of the Lord would have prevented our representatives from any unionistic approach to the doctrinal discussions, such as treating erring Lutherans as brethren, practicing joint prayer with them, etc. (In the first series

of meetings a non-Lutheran bishop is reported to have preached one of the sermons.)

But it is not only that these men are for their own persons erring Lutherans. A second circumstance must be added which has aggravated the offense given. These Lutherans are now members of the newly formed EKID, that corrupt German church which harbors not only all kinds of different creeds, but also various shades of liberal theology down to rankest unbelief, which is by no means dead and extinct in Germany, but still very much alive, as is shown by many theological books which have recently appeared off the press. Therefore, by any fraternizing with these Lutheran members of the EKID, a bridge is being built which connects members of the Missouri Synod with this apostate church body. Missourians who participated in the first Bad Boll conference had implicated themselves in the sin of this church by dissuading these Lutherans from remaining separate from the EKID and by advising them to join it. The only Scriptural way, and at the same time the only way in which these modernistic Lutherans might, in the course of time, attain to true and full Lutheranism, would be by remaining out of the EKID and keeping in contact with our truly Lutheran Free Churches. To dissuade struggling Lutherans from taking this course, and to advise them to join a church which according to God's command should be avoided, constitutes a case of rank disobedience and seduction to disobedience to God's Word. No matter how this whole procedure is excused or adorned, to obey is better than sacrifice.

J. B.

✻ The New Theology of Confusion Emanating from St. Louis

In the April issue of the *American Lutheran*, in an article entitled "Church and Church Unity — A Confessional View," Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan, newly appointed instructor at Concordia Seminary, expounds the new theology of confusion emanating from St. Louis, which he shares with other members of the St. Louis faculty.

"The Institutional and the Sectarian View of the Church"

Distinguishing between the "institutional view" and the "sectarian view" of the Church, Dr. Pelikan says of the former: "The institutional view understands the Church primarily as an external organization, analogous to other social groupings in which men band together for certain specific purposes." He then rightly adds that the Roman Catholic Church and the state-churches

of Europe are the chief exponents of this view, and that this view is rejected by the Lutheran Church.

However, regarding the "sectarian view" the newly appointed instructor at St. Louis writes as follows: "The sectarian view sees the Church as essentially a company composed only of those who are truly Christian, and it refuses to identify the Church with any of the forms which the Church's life has taken or with any of the organizations which the Church has developed. Sectarianism emphasizes purity as prerequisite to membership, although this purity is variously understood. In certain forms of sectarianism, moral purity is stressed and it is maintained that only those who live a godly life belong to the Church. At other times purity of theology has been central, and a certain degree of conformity to a fixed theological standard has been demanded as a minimal requirement for membership in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. . . . Characteristic of the sectarian approach is a basic spiritualism; the true Church is only visible to God, and for us it has a spiritual, but not a practical significance. The Church exists, but it exists only in the mind of God and in the hearts of the true believers. There also the true unity of the true Church is to be found, rather than in any visible fellowship."

Examining the above words very carefully, and then comparing them with the Lutheran Confessions, we find that the newly appointed instructor at St. Louis is in reality thereby designating the Lutheran doctrine of the Church, as laid down in its Confessions, as a "sectarian view."

Repudiating the Lutheran Doctrine of the Church

Dr. Pelikan contends that the *sectarian* view of the Church "sees the Church as essentially a company composed only of those who are truly Christian." That is actually the Confession of the Lutheran Church. The Augsburg Confession declares: "The Church properly is the congregation of saints and true believers." (*Trigl.*, p. 47.) The Smalcald Articles confess: "Thank God, a child of seven years old knows what the Church is, namely, the holy believers and lambs who hear the voice of their Shepherd." (*Trigl.*, p. 499.)

Dr. Pelikan contends that the *sectarian* view of the Church "refuses to identify the Church with any of the forms which the Church's life has taken or with any of the organizations which the Church has developed." That is the Confession of the Lutheran Church. The Apology says: "The Church is not only the fellowship of outward objects and rites, as other governments, but

it is originally a fellowship of faith and of the Holy Ghost in hearts." (*Trigl.*, p. 227.)

Dr. Pelikan contends that *sectarianism* "emphasizes purity as a prerequisite to membership." He also contends that in certain forms of *sectarianism* "moral purity is stressed and it is maintained that only those who live a godly life belong to the Church." That is the Confession of the Lutheran Church. The Apology says: "The wicked are ruled by the devil, and are captives of the devil; they are not ruled by the Spirit of Christ. . . . If the Church, which is truly the kingdom of God, is distinguished from the kingdom of the devil, it follows necessarily that the wicked, since they are in the kingdom of the devil, are not the Church." (*Trigl.*, p. 231.)

Dr. Pelikan contends that in certain forms of *sectarianism* "purity of theology has been central." That is the Confession of the Lutheran Church. The Augsburg Confession reads: "The Church is the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered. And to the true unity of the Church it is enough to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments." The German, which has equal authority with the Latin, has the last sentence as follows: "that the Gospel is harmoniously preached according to (its) pure apprehension and the Sacraments are administered according to the divine Word." (*Trigl.*, p. 47.) The Apology says: "Where God's Word is pure, and the Sacraments are administered in conformity with the same, there certainly is the Church, and there are Christians." (*Trigl.*, p. 227.)

Dr. Pelikan contends that in certain forms of *sectarianism* "a certain degree of conformity to a fixed theological standard has been demanded as a minimal requirement of membership in the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church." He also contends that it is a characteristic of the *sectarian* approach to hold that "the true unity of the true Church is to be found in the hearts of the true believers, rather than in any visible fellowship." That is the Confession of the Lutheran Church. Referring to the words of the Augsburg Confession quoted above, the Apology says: "We are speaking of true, *i. e.*, of spiritual unity (we say that those are one harmonious Church who believe in one Christ; who have one Gospel, one Spirit, one faith, the same Sacraments; and we are speaking, therefore, of spiritual unity), without which faith in the heart, or righteousness of heart before God, cannot exist." (*Trigl.*, p. 237.)

Dr. Pelikan contends that a "basic spiritualism" is a characteristic of the *sectarian* approach. He contends also that it is a characteristic of the *sectarian* approach to hold that the Church is only

visible to God and that it exists only in the hearts of true believers. That is the Confession of the Lutheran Church. The Apology says: "The Church is a spiritual people, *i. e.*, that it has been distinguished from the heathen not by civil rites, but that it is the true people of God, regenerated by the Holy Ghost." (*Trigl.*, p. 231.) Again it says: "The Church consists not only in fellowship of outward signs, but it consists especially in inward communion of eternal blessings in the heart, as of the Holy Ghost, of faith, of the fear and love of God." (*Trigl.*, p. 227.) It is true, the Lutheran Confessions do not expressly state that the Church is "invisible," but that thought is thoroughly Lutheran. Luther says: "Therefore we rightly confess the holy Christian Creed, that we believe one holy Christian Church. For it is invisible and dwells in spirit in a place, where no one can approach." (St. Louis Ed., IX, p. 702.) Again, Luther says that the Church is "invisible and spiritual" and is apprehended "solely by faith." (XVIII, p. 1445; cf. also IV, 1425; XVII, 1338; XVIII, p. 1349, 1469; XXII, 603f., 989, etc., etc.) Again and again Luther emphasizes the spiritual nature of the Church; but, of course, he does not ignore its practical significance, for it is through the Word and Sacraments that the Church comes into existence.

Hence we see that what Dr. Pelikan designates as a *sectarian* view of the Church is in reality the teaching of the Lutheran Church, as laid down in its Confessions. The newly appointed instructor at St. Louis is in reality repudiating the teaching of the very Confessions which he has sworn to uphold.

The Simple Catechism Truth

Our Catechism defines the Church in these words: "The holy Christian Church is the communion of saints, that is, the *whole number of believers in Christ*; for all believers, and *only* believers, are members of this Church. (The invisible Church.)" (Quest. 175.)

In distinction to this "spiritual body" the Catechism defines the "visible" Church in the following words: "The visible Church is the whole number of those *who use the Word of God and profess the Christian faith*, but among whom, besides the true Christians, there are also hypocrites." (Quest. 182.)

This simple formulation of the doctrine of the Church does not satisfy the newly appointed instructor at St. Louis. He writes: "The doctrine of a visible and an invisible Church must be seen as a serious effort to come to terms with and to formulate both aspects of Lutheranism's struggle to discover the nature of the Church.

But in its desire to avoid the difficulties involved in this struggle, that effort is in danger of creating inconsistencies that impair its value and usefulness. The attributes and functions assigned to the Church in the New Testament are sorted and classified as belonging either to the visible or to the invisible Church. . . . The incongruities of such terminology would seem to make another formulation desirable."

And what would Dr. Pelikan propose as a substitute for the simple formulation of our Catechism?

The Church the Body of Christ

Dr. Pelikan writes: "Such a formulation is present in the New Testament picture of the Church as the body of Christ. . . . There can be wounds in the body of Christ, and that body can suffer at the hands of evil men. It can be persecuted and attacked, rent asunder by schisms and distressed by heresies. A body, characteristically, always has both living and dead cells which it carries with it, and at a given moment it is difficult or impossible to distinguish the living from the dead. The Church, the body of Christ, is similarly afflicted. It carries with it both dead and living cells, and the distinction between them is not always clear."

Here the newly appointed instructor at St. Louis definitely confuses the so-called invisible Church, the congregation of true believers, with the so-called visible Church, the "mixed body," in which unbelievers are mingled with believers. He regards the latter as the body of Christ. Thereby Dr. Pelikan clearly rejects the words of the Apology: "The Church is originally a fellowship of faith and of the Holy Ghost in hearts. . . . And this Church alone is called the body of Christ, which Christ renews (Christ is its Head, and) sanctifies and governs by His Spirit, as Paul testifies, Eph. 1, 22sq., when he says: And gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. Wherefore, those in whom Christ does not act (through His Spirit) are not the members of Christ." (*Trigl.* p. 227.)

Following in the footsteps of Delitzsch (cf. Baier-Walther, *Compendium*, III, 620; Pieper, *Dogmatik*, III, 470, footnote), Dr. Pelikan speaks of "dead cells" in the body of Christ, which obviously refers to unbelievers. Now there may be sick members in the body of Christ, but there certainly are no dead members in the body of Christ. Unbelief is spiritual death. Christ is spiritual life. The two cannot exist side by side. Whoever abides not in Christ is cast away "immediately," John 15:6. (Cf. *Lehre und Wehre*, 1907, p. 400f.)

To speak of unbelievers as "dead cells" in the body of Christ is plainly a repudiation of the Scriptural and Lutheran doctrine that the one holy Christian Church is the *congregation of true believers*.

Furthermore, to say that the body of Christ can be rent asunder by schisms (except in the sense that members can be torn from it, their faith destroyed) is also confusing the invisible and the visible Church. The visible Church can be rent asunder. But the invisible Church cannot be rent asunder (except in the above stated sense) for it is one, as our Catechism says: "There is only one Church; for all believers are a communion of saints, or one spiritual body, whose one and only Head is Christ." (Ques. 177.) Or does the newly appointed instructor at St. Louis contend that there are two or more bodies of Christ?

Luther has rightly said in his Large Catechism: "I believe that there is upon earth a little holy group and congregation of pure saints, under one head, even Christ, called together by the Holy Ghost in one faith, one mind and understanding, with manifold gifts, yet agreeing in love, *without sects or schisms*." (Trigl., p. 691.)

False Teaching Regarding the Unity of the Church

A false doctrine of the Church naturally leads to false teaching regarding the unity of the Church. On this point Dr. Pelikan writes: "The degree of unity which exists determines the forms of expression by which it can be appropriately articulated. There is a degree of fellowship commensurate with every existing degree of unity."

Pray, where does Scripture distinguish various degrees of fellowship? Without any restrictions or qualifications God says: "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and AVOID THEM," Rom. 16:17.

Where Will It End?

Dr. Pelikan says that "the New Testament understanding of Christian fellowship seems to imply that unity is to be sought primarily within a parish community." Dr. Pelikan does not explain this further, but he seems to lead up to the position advocated by Dr. Theodore Graebner in an essay entitled "Church and Churches" and held at Woerth, Alsace, in August, 1949, which is supposed to be identical with his lecture at Bad Boll last summer.

Since this essay will undoubtedly be treated in detail in a later issue, we would at this time merely outline Dr. Graebner's latest position. Dr. Graebner contends that the local congregation is "Church" since it is a divine institution.

Congregations should not join congregations "without agreement in doctrine and in the administration of the Sacraments." But the World Council of Churches, the Lutheran World Convention, the EKID, the VELKD, the National Lutheran Council, the Synodical Conference, and the Missouri Synod are not "Church" because they are human institutions. The purpose of such organizations is not the "fulfillment of a divine commission but the solution of problems raised by time and world." In such union and cooperation "nothing of the truth, as we have learned to know it, dare be given up or regarded as a matter of indifference." And when, for instance, the Lutherans, the Evangelicals, and the Reformed drew up certain articles at Barmen and later founded the EKID, it is a "horrible changing over to another thing" to proclaim such articles a confession of faith, according to Dr. Graebner.

That is where the new theology of confusion emanating from St. Louis is leading to. As the *Lutheran Witness* so aptly put it in 1925, "Unionism begins by adopting articles which gloze over 'minor' differences in doctrine. It ends in joining the hand of fellowship with the Sadducee and the icon-worshiper." D.

● Chicago Study Club, April 25 and 26, 1950

The spirit of the meeting was one of very solemn earnestness, as we looked forward to the impending Milwaukee Convention and considered the great issues which demand decisive action in accordance with God's Word at that time, in order that unity and peace may be restored to our well beloved but grievously disturbed and sorely tried Synod.

The first paper on the program was presented by Prof. Walter Albrecht, of Springfield: "Review of Dr. Walther's Series of Articles in *Lehre und Wehre*, 14: 'Vorwort' and 'Die falschen Stützen der modernen Theorie von den offenen Fragen.'" Together with a clear and lucid presentation of Dr. Walther's train of thought the essayist brought a comparison of Dr. Arndt's contrasted position as revealed in his Western District Synodical essay of 1948. Professor Albrecht's splendid presentation brought back to many a hearer, as was repeatedly expressed from the floor, a lively reminiscence of the carefully prepared, meaty, and satisfying Conference and Synodical essays so often heard in the earlier and better days of our Synod. Professor Albrecht was heartily thanked for his paper, to which, as one of the brethren stated, "it was a God-given treat to listen," and was requested to make it available. He agreed to do so,

after incorporating into it material from Dr. Arndt's 1949 California essay, which had not originally been utilized. We shall look forward to the opportunity of studying Prof. Albrecht's thorough work.

Those whose orders for the so-called "White Paper" or "Do You Know?" have not yet been filled may look forward to receiving their copy soon, since the kindness of one of our brethren has provided a good supply of printed copies. Those who have not yet ordered will find it worthwhile to write, while the supply lasts, to the corresponding secretary of the Study Club, Rev. H. David Mensing, 159th and Oak Park Avenue, Tinley Park, Illinois. The cost is thirty-five cents per copy.

Pastor A. T. Kretzmann, of Crete, Illinois, presented an important and informative review of facts and tendencies to be kept in mind as we look toward the Milwaukee Convention, and very serious discussion followed.

Tuesday night again witnessed a large gathering of interested laymen and women, this time at Grace Church (Pastor G. Elbert), at S. 28th and Karlov Streets. At this meeting a presentation on "The Fellowship Demanded by God's Word," by Prof. C. W. Spiegel, of Springfield, and one on "The Fellowship Forbidden by God's Word," by Pastor W. H. McLaughlin, of Pittsburgh, were heard and discussed. I was prevented by my personal participation from keeping adequate notes for a report on this meeting. I may state, however, that Professor Spiegel's free and genial presentation of his topic provided very delightful listening.

The topics of the second day's Study Club sessions looked chiefly toward the broader horizons, especially in Europe, and clearly demonstrated the group's interest in Missions and in world Lutheranism. Much of the information provided and discussion aroused on this day was also of very vital importance, but space for reporting is limited. One matter that cannot be left unmentioned was the discussion in the closing session on the so-called "Common Confession," led by Pastor A. C. Dahms, utilizing material received from Pastor Carl A. Bramscher, of Alpha, Minnesota. After lengthy and careful discussion, widely participated in from the floor, the Chicago Study Club, by unanimous vote of those present, declared that we reject the Common Confession as ambiguous and inadequate to adjust the differences between the two bodies, and that over against this document we stand on the Brief Statement of 1932, reaffirmed in 1947. It was decided that this declaration be embodied in a Memorial to be submitted to Synod, the wording of which was referred to the Planning Com-

mittee, provision then being made for those desiring to do so to sign this Memorial at the present meeting, signatures being attested by our corresponding secretary. With regard to ambiguous expressions in a doctrinal statement please look up *Luther* (St. Louis Edition) XVIII, 1996, 24.

We close with the prayer: May God graciously restore our Synod as a truly confessional, non-unionistic, unanimously orthodox fellowship in the pure faith of His Holy Word! For the sake of our blessed Redeemer's merit, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost ever liveth, one triune eternal God. Amen.

W. H. M.

ON THE UNION FRONT

The 1949 All-Lutheran Seminars

The American Lutheran Conference again sponsored a series of one-day All-Lutheran Seminars in various cities toward the end of last year. The report on these Seminars was held over because of more pressing matters demanding space. However, we believe it will prove of interest to our readers even at this late date, to share with them a few items from our notes on the Seminars.

In general, the All-Lutheran Seminars were devoted to the theme: "That Men May Know Christ Today," with two subtopics, "God Gives Christ and His Church" and "Members of a Living Lutheran Church Witness to Christ." Although discussions of doctrinal differences were not on the program, the meetings were opened with joint devotions. Several Missouri Synod men (mostly Statementarians) spoke at various places on one or the other of the above topics. They behaved themselves more circumspectly than was the case during the 1948 series of Seminars.

St. Louis

The day sessions at St. Louis, on October 11, were attended by pastors only, the addresses being by Dr. Bernard J. Holm of the American Lutheran Conference and Rev. Alfred Klausler of the Missouri Synod.

On the same evening the St. Louis Pastoral Conference and the local Lutheran Laymen's League conducted a panel discussion and open forum for the laity on "Unity." The three lay speakers were Dr. Gustav Mehlquist, Augustana Church; John Dameron, United Lutheran Church; Dr. Walter Gast, Missouri Synod. The *St. Louis Lutheran* (October 15) reports that "tremendous applause" greeted the following statement:

"Tonight I have been brought face to face with the fact that I, a member of the Missouri Synod, do not know what differences stand between us and the other Lutheran churches. And so, I cannot ask objectively anything about this discussion. It seems to me a great deal of education should be done throughout the churches of the various synods to discover the differences. I feel quite sure that brought out in the light, they will not be great differences." The *St. Louis Lutheran* stated that the rest of the Lutheran laity "in St. Louis felt equally as ignorant on the issues of Lutheran unity and cooperation." "The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer spoken by the group in unison." Dr. Mehlquist "expressed his belief that it is possible to have functional cooperation among all Lutherans, despite differences."

Reliable materials for education of the laity concerning Lutheran synodical differences are rather rare. We suggest Wicke's "Catechism of Differences," Lussy's "The Missouri Synod Layman and Lutheran Union," and the Confessional Lutheran tracts.

La Crosse

The Seminar scheduled for La Crosse, Wisconsin, on October 12, was not held because of almost complete lack of attendance by pastors, although a small meeting for laymen was held in the evening. The Rev. H. Lindemann embarked from La Crosse for his next stop, after having waited in vain for an audience.

Seminars of a Better Type

A number of Missouri Synod pastors and their congregations have begun to conduct inter-congregational seminars or informational meetings designed especially for the average layman of the Missouri Synod. The conviction is growing that the Missouri Synod must regain its own doctrinal solidarity and ward off the encroachments of false teaching from within, before it can have an effective influence for good among other Lutherans. Also, these inter-congregational meetings are proving to be an effective means of informing the lay people in doctrinal matters, concerning which they have a right to be informed.

One such layman's Seminar was held at the Hanna, Indiana, Lutheran Church, on March 17. The theme of the meeting was: "The State of Doctrine and Union in the Missouri Synod." Over 100 communicant members from eight rural congregations, with their pastors, were in attendance. Deep concern for the welfare and preservation of the Missouri Synod's historic Scriptural stand on unionism was evidenced by all in the discussions.

Similar laymen's seminars, on a much larger scale, have been held recently in Chicago, Oak Park, and Chicago Heights, Illinois. Among the discussion leaders were also laymen who were well-informed and possessed of fine Biblical insight.

Jottings

Supplementing the report of the conference of the pastors of the Lutheran Council of Great Britain (*Lutheran Witness*, May 16, p. 151), which brought together pastors of the Missouri Synod, the National Lutheran Council, etc., the *Lutheran Standard* of March 25, p. 11, brings the following paragraph: "Rev. Pearce of the Missouri Synod preached the Communion sermon." A. V. K.

● Review of Publications

The Church in the World. By Richard R. Caemmerer, Ph. D. Concordia Publishing House, 1949. xiv and 110 pages.

This is a strange book — a very strange book! It is a strange book, for one thing, *on account of its language*. Not because the author does not write a very good English or is at a loss for words, since his command of the English language is adequate for any situation. But the language which the author uses is not that to which we are accustomed in books in the field of religion, the theological language which has been characteristic of our synodical publications for approximately one hundred years. The reader finds it very difficult to square the language of the book's discussions with that used in the Lutheran Confessions, especially the Small Catechism with its explanation, and the essays delivered at the various synodical conventions. It is rather the language of "a Christian philosophy of religion," applied to one particular field of Christian teaching.

It is a strange book, in particular, *on account of large sections of its contents*. The characterization of the world, for example, is well done, and the section on ritualism in the Church presents the truth in a forceful way. But the book is spoiled because it clearly shows the influence of the theology of confusion, which has raised its ugly head in the Missouri Synod during the last two decades, and in particular since the publication and dissemination of the so-called Chicago "Statement," with its doctrinal aberrations. The strangest trait of the theology of confusion is this that those who have fallen prey to its insidious charms will sometimes, often in the same sermon or article written for publication, have sections which are beautifully correct, while

other parts show the evidences of doubt, uncertainty, lack of clarity, compromise.

In this book we find, almost throughout, a peculiar lack of clarity concerning the doctrine of the Church, since the author does not make a clear distinction between the Church in the proper sense of the term, the invisible, or rather, the hidden Church, namely that included and enclosed in the mass of confessors, whose membership, however, is known to God alone, Luke 17:21; 2 Tim. 2:19a; Col. 3:3b, and visible bodies. The Church is indeed the "very body of Christ in the world," Eph. 5:30; 1 Cor. 12:12f. (cp. Col. 1:18), but we cannot identify the visible group of Christians in the world with the Holy Christian Church. It is by virtue of a common figure of speech, a metonymy, that the apostle refers to the Church of Christ which is present in the midst of every Christian congregation. See 1 Cor. 1:2. This mistake of confounding the two terms is frequently made by the author, as on page 2, page 104, and elsewhere.

The other obvious confusion of the book is found in this that he places the factors which pertain to the strategy of winning the world for Christ in the wrong order, *first love, second the Word*. The author indeed states that this strategy is laid down in a number of portions of the New Testament. However, we find that the order throughout Holy Writ is conditioned by the preaching of sin and grace. Both the Forerunner and the Savior are said to have begun their public preaching with the admonition: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." Even the Apostle of Love followed the order, first the message, then fellowship with God, then the expression of this fellowship toward our fellowmen. There can be no true love except as the fruit of faith, and faith cometh by hearing.

Unfortunately there are also many other deviations from the clear teaching of the Word. Page 2: "God imparted His own Spirit to man at creation." The text, in Gen. 2:7, does not speak of the Holy Spirit, but of the breath of life, the intelligent soul. — Page 3: "The life reproduced by human birth is merely the physical life." (Traducianism is certainly implied in Ps. 51:5 and John 3:6). — Page 43: "The Savior's plan is laid down in the Sermon on the Mount." Christ Himself laid down His plan in Luke 19:10. — Page 44: "The Kingdom, the indwelling of God." This is definitely not adequate, in view of the fact that the Kingdom may be the Kingdom of Power, of Grace, or of Glory, or simply the Kingly Rule of the Redeemer. — Page 67: "We achieve a witness in the individual Christian which is genuinely pre-

paratory to the Gospel of Christ." A show of love on the part of a Christian, like the arguments of Apologetics, can never take the place of the method employed throughout the Bible: there can be no acceptance of the Savior of sinners unless a genuine knowledge of sin is first produced by the Law, properly applied. — Page 69: "Our whole knowledge of God is simply the restoration of love and its power. In the beginning God made man to be in His image, to be a walking reproduction and display to human sight and experience of the essential and distinctive nature of God Himself, and that nature is love." But the Apostle writes: "Put on the new man, which is *renewed in knowledge* after the image of Him that created him." Col. 3:10. Only when this is done will verses 12 to 14 follow.

One more point. On page 102 we find two interesting sentences. "It remains the business of our church leadership and the passion of each Christian's prayer to seek through patience and firmness to work toward the removal of the offense of denominational distinctions between Christians. They are uniformly the symptom of the flesh rather than the spirit." That statement, as it stands, cannot remain unchallenged. It is true, of course, that every aberration from the truth of Holy Writ stems from the sinful flesh of man. But for that very reason those who, by the grace of God, are in possession of the truth must, in agreement with Scripture, "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," Jude, v. 3; they must "mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which they have learned, AND AVOID THEM," Rom. 16:17; they must watch for men rising in the midst of orthodox congregations and church bodies and speaking perverse things, Acts 20:30; they must insist that only sound, wholesome doctrine be found in the Church which bears the name of Him who said: "Beware of false prophets," Matt. 7:15. If those in possession of the full truth separate themselves from heretics and errorists, they are not guilty of denominationalism, but they show the proper obedience to the Word of God and follow in the footsteps of men like Paul, Acts 13:51; 18:6, and of John, 1 John 4:1; 2:19. In these various instances, therefore, we simply have another indication of confusion of teaching and inadequate presentation.

In conclusion, we call attention to the following misprints: page 11, line 8, an "i" missing; page 42, second last line, wrong form.

P. E. KRETZMANN.

● What Our Readers Say

"As a former pastor of the ALC, I must say that the great work which is being done through the publication of the *Confessional Lutheran* by its staff is commendable. Not only commendable but it proves to me, that there are still men, who love the Truth, which shall make us free. It also proves to us that there are still those that are willing to abide by that sacred Truth, which others love. Especially in these trying times, when so many are willing to sacrifice the old established standards, which have made the Lutheran Church what she is, in spite of her many weaknesses, which have been foisted upon her by those who fail to realize what they are doing. Yes, I repeat, fail to realize what they are doing.

"Our one prayer is, that God may protect her bulwarks against those who are determined to sell her down the road, just for the sake of a Union, or a merger. Experience has taught many of us that we are to beware of any further Union until all parties concerned are able to prove not just on paper that they are in agreement. Let us beware of those who do not practice what they subscribe to merely on paper. Certainly the old Ohio Synod was not strengthened by a merger. These are facts which cannot be disproven. Past actions, past deeds, have borne this out very clearly.

"In closing, let me state this warning: let us move very cautiously, very carefully, lest we lose what we had. Lest we find ourselves where those found themselves in the land where the Reformation was born. Again, we must fight the good fight of faith, if we wish to lay hold on eternal life. That is what Dr. Martin Luther stood for, fought for, and died for. And why? Because he appreciated what God had done for him. Let us remember that at the coming convention which meets in Milwaukee. Hence again, brethren, please do not let those down who treasure those things, which were not always granted unto them. Therefore more power and courage to those who are responsible for this great paper, the *Confessional Lutheran*." — (Pastor, formerly of the ALC, now of the Missouri Synod.)

"You will find enclosed one dollar for a year's subscription to the *Confessional Lutheran*. I believe that you are doing a great work for truly Confessional Lutheranism. I am of the American Lutheran Church, but in a confessional state with the Missouri Synod. When I came over to Missouri's Scriptural position I was most disheartened to see conditions as bad as those in

the A. L. C. But when I saw the *Confessional Lutheran* I was able to say with one of the founders of Missouri, 'Thank God, there are still (true) Lutherans in America!' — Illinois.

"Will you please renew my subscription to the *Confessional Lutheran*. I consider this periodical a 'must' in my reading repertoire. May its clarion call reach the ears of many who sleep and may He guide and direct you in this brave confession!" — Parochial School Teacher (Missouri Synod), Minnesota.

"The *Confessional Lutheran* is what the name implies — a truly Lutheran magazine that is Scriptural in content and loyally Confessional. I appreciate its firm, unyielding stand. In days of wavering and uncertain and compromising statements let us 'hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering'; 'He is faithful that promised'." — Pastor, Colorado.

"The reading of the *Confessional Lutheran* is refreshing. . . . You have many silent supporters. Keep up the struggle in behalf of the truth." — Pastor, New York.

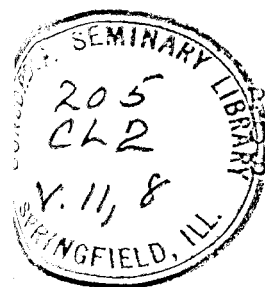
● Correction

In the May issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*, in the "Letter to Dr. Theo. Graebner to Bishop Meiser," p. 57, lines 8 and 9 from the bottom should, as readers will no doubt have noticed, read: "This report induces me to inform you . . ." Under "What Our Readers Say," p. 64, first paragraph, second and third last lines should read: "but the victory cannot be obtained but through strife."

**THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST
BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF
THE MISSOURI SYNOD**

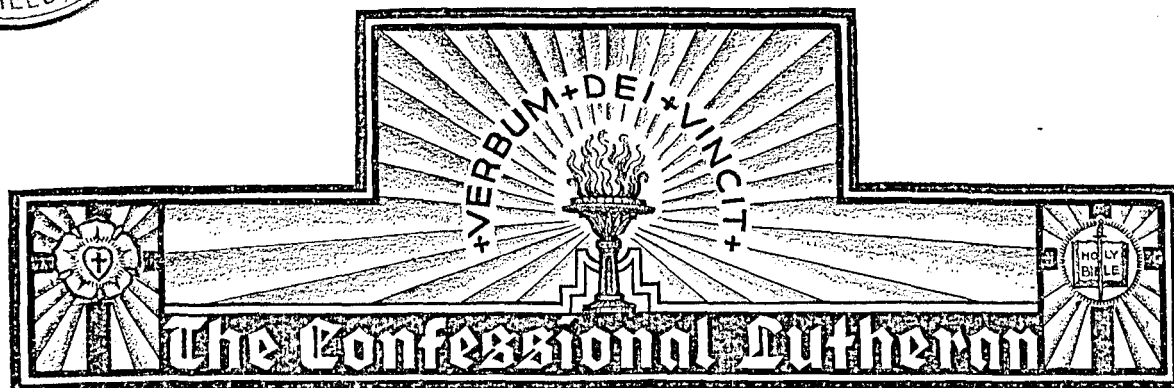
**THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF
THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44"
MUST BE REJECTED**

**EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL
WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD**



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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession, Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

AUGUST, 1950

VOLUME 8

IN THIS ISSUE: Keep Your Feet on the Ground! — The Dream of a Resurrection of the Martyrs — Is Modernism Dead in Germany? — Distinctive Doctrines of the Evangelical Lutheran Church — On the Union Front — Augustana Lutherans Moving "Left" — Review of Publications — What Our Readers Say.

● Keep Your Feet on the Ground!

In Greek mythology one of the celebrated exploits of Hercules was his victory over Antaeus. Antaeus, the son of Terra, the Earth, was a mighty giant and wrestler, whose strength was invincible so long as he remained in contact with his mother Earth. He compelled all strangers who came to his country to wrestle with him, on condition that if conquered (as they all were) they should be put to death. Hercules encountered him, and finding that it was of no avail to throw him, for he always arose with renewed strength with every fall, he lifted him up from the earth and strangled him in the air.

In the present conflict with modernism and liberalism you will remain invincible as long as you keep your feet on the ground. The ground on which we stand and which alone can give strength to your position is the Word of God. Let anyone take your feet off this holy ground, for instance by such false slogans as "non-fundamentals are non-divisive" and the like, and it will be a comparatively easy task to strangle the spiritual life out of you as you dangle there in mid-air. If, on the other hand, you are by divine grace determined to abide by all that Christ has commanded you, not suffering a jot or tittle of God's Word to be taken from under your feet, you will

"damnation," why should not "the first resurrection" be deliverance from damnation?

Dr. Matzner, however, argues: "But this interpretation does not make sense when we apply it to verse 5, 'But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.' That would mean that during the period known as the thousand years there will be no spiritual resurrections, that is, no one will be converted. If the thousand years lie in past history, was there ever such a time in which no one was converted?" Note, the word "again" is not in the Greek text, as you can see from the Revised Version, which reads: "The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished." Furthermore, the word "until" does not say that after the thousand years they did live. It merely states that during the thousand years they remained in unbelief. When Scripture says: "Michal the daughter of Saul had no child until the day of her death," Scripture is not thereby saying that she had a child after her death. And so the words, "The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished," do not with even one syllable indicate a resurrection of the rest of the dead, be it a spiritual resurrection by coming to faith or a bodily resurrection from the grave. The sentence merely tells us that during the thousand years their status did not change. They remained enemies of Christ. So then "there will be no spiritual resurrections, that is, no one will be converted" during the thousand years? Don't believe Dr. Matzner. Believe the text. It says: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." To be blessed and holy and to escape the second death one must have part in the first resurrection. Now, according to Dr. Matzner, these are only "those who have been faithful under the dreadful persecutions and have died as martyrs." The rest of the believers, "which had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands," but were not "beheaded for the witness of Jesus," do not belong to "these favored ones," are granted no "distinction." Their faith is vain. They which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished because they were not martyrs. Isn't it evident that all who limit the prophecy of John to martyrs are misinterpreting the text? Verse 6 shows plainly that John is here not talking only of martyrs, but of all who will let neither the hatred of the world nor the blandishments of the Antichrist and other false prophets separate them from their Savior, but remain faithful unto death.

But you say, The text says "they shall reign with him a thousand years." Listen, even Dr. Matzner grants: "If we are told that these favored ones will rule with Christ for a thousand years, that is a thought not at all foreign to Scripture; Christ also spoke of those who will rule with Him." Let's look at some of these passages. Matt. 19, 28 and Luke 22, 28-30 Christ promises His apostles that, "when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." 1 Cor. 6, 2 Paul writes: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?" To Timothy he writes (2 Ep. 2, 12): "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him." And here in the Book of Revelation (1, 6) John says: "And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." And in the fifth chapter: "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." All Christians, all who take part in the first resurrection, are promised rule with Christ, here and hereafter. There are no few "favored ones," no "distinction is granted" to certain martyrs. The new covenant (Jer. 31, 31-34), has this feature that the mind and will of God and the mind and will of the Christians coincide, that what Christ says and does the Christians say and do. When Christ blesses a man or a people, we bless them. When Christ curses an individual or a nation, we curse them (Ps. 5, 6, 10; Gal. 1, 8). We, the members, do what Christ, the Head, does. Let me quote Luther, who calls us "the lords and gods of the world." He says of the kingship of the Christians: "One dare not separate from one another the Head and His members, that is, Christ and His apostles and all Christendom. Every single Christian is such a man as the Lord Christ Himself was on earth and does such great things as ruling the whole world in divine matters, helping and benefitting everyone, and does the greatest works occurring on earth. . . . We are indeed poor beggars, says St. Paul 2 Cor. 6, 10, 'yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.' And this also is true: Whatever kings, princes, lords, urbanites, and farmers possess, that they have gotten not because of their blond hair, but because of Christ and His Christians. . . . Lords, urbanites, and farmers are getting their land with its inhabitants, their power, honor, and goods because of the Christians living in their midst, though they do not see it and reward it with evil. . . . If you are baptized, says Christ, and believe in Me, you are a man who has and can do much more and greater things, yes, who does the very works and greater

ones than I now do, John 14, 12. For I shall make of you who believe in Me such lords that your works shall count and accomplish more than those of any king or lord on earth, that you shall bring about and achieve whatever you desire, and help Me rule both spiritually over the souls unto salvation and also bodily (in material matters) through your prayer obtain and preserve all there is on earth, that they must receive and have it all from you and so unconsciously enjoy your blessings." St. L. VIII, 350ff. Not only is the world and the universe ruled in the interest of the Christians, but, insofar as they by faith possess all that belongs to Christ and with Him do all that He does, they own the universe, the world, and all things in the world. "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Cephas, or Apollos, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours," 1 Cor. 3, 21. "What the 2nd Psalm says of Christ alone, Christ Himself ascribes to all that are His, Rev. 2, 26, 27: 'He that overcometh, and keepeth My works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father.' It is true, of course, that the reign of the believers over the world will be revealed only on Judgment Day. But it is a fact already before Judgment Day, even though the believers to all appearances are the suppressed, the succumbing, and the slain." Pieper, Translation, III, 308.

What does Christ promise those who were soon to become martyrs after His return to the Father? He says: "I will raise him up at the last day," John 6, 40. But perhaps those who died earlier as martyrs, before the incarnation of the Son of God, are an exception? Christ says: "The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and shall come forth . . . unto the resurrection of life . . . unto the resurrection of damnation," John 5, 28f. Does Scripture therefore leave room for two resurrections at different times? It is apparent, the dream of chiliasm of a separate resurrection of martyrs before Judgment Day is a misinterpretation of Rev. 20, 4-6.

Therefore we confess in our Brief Statement, adopted in 1932 and reaffirmed in 1947 as a correct expression of the doctrine of the Missouri Synod: "With the Augsburg Confession we reject . . . that before the general resurrection on Judgment Day a number of departed Christians or martyrs are to be raised again to reign in glory in this world. . . . Over against this, Scripture clearly teaches, and we teach accordingly, . . . that there will be but one resurrection of the dead, John 5, 28; 6, 39, 40."

"O Timothy, keep that which is committed thy trust," 1 Tim. 6, 20.

● Is Modernism Dead In Germany?

That the old modernism is dead in Germany is one of the fantastic claims of Dr. Theo. Graefner, equalled only by similar assertions concerning the status of certain Lutheran bodies in America, not to forget misrepresentations on the part of the same journalist concerning even such anti-Christian forces as Romanism and Communism.

Whoever wants to know the truth concerning the status of modernism in Germany can easily and quickly inform himself with regard to it by consulting a recent survey by one of its ardent advocates, Dr. Hans-Werner Bartsch, titled *Manual of Evangelic-Theological Work 1938-1948*. (Published, in German, by the Evangelical Publication Concern in Stuttgart, Germany 1949.) This survey of hundreds of publications covering practically the whole field of German theological work during the past decade, shows clearly what has been going on in Germany under the name of evangelical theology during this period. While an evaluation of it has already been presented to our readers, we felt that in view of the importance of the matter another presentation, emphasizing certain phases of German liberalism which have not already been extensively touched upon would not be amiss.

It should perhaps be said at the outset that the word "Evangelical" as here used means no more than it does in the official name of the latest unionistic federation of churches in Germany, — the EKdD (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*) — the "Evangelical Church in Germany." It means practically no more than just merely unionistically Protestant. In fact, it hardly means even that any more. For in the World Council of Churches German "Evangelicalism" is affiliated even with certain Catholic sects toward constituting an "ecumenic" movement.

Perhaps the most revealing section of Dr. Bartsch's survey is its second chapter, dealing with New Testament Theology (pp. 44-78), on which liberalism's systematic theology (pp. 9-43) is said to rest. Concerning this relationship of exegetical New Testament research and systematic theology (doctrine), the author says: "Works in the field of systematic theology find their exegetical basis in New Testament research," p. 75. (One is, by the way, here reminded of the similar false principle of the "44": "We affirm our conviction that sound exegetical procedure is the basis for sound Lutheran theology"; Chicago

Statement, 1945, Sect. V. The constant false emphasis of two of the leading protagonists among the "44," Drs. Graebner and Arndt, on "interpretation" and "exegetical problems" is wholly in line with this false principle. A true theologian bases his theology directly on Scripture, whether it be systematic, exegetical, historical, or practical theology. Whatever is not Biblical is not theological.)

Most important in the exegetical "research" of modernistic German theology, as shown by Dr. Bartsch's survey, is its false distinction (invented by one Martin Kaehler) between "historisch" and "geschichtlich." We recall that a member of the Missouri Synod Presidium, in reporting enthusiastically the "Begegnung" of Missourians with German theologians at Bad Boll II stated, almost as an afterthought, that of course there was not entire agreement, and that some peculiar language was used once in a while, such as this distinction between "historisch" and "geschichtlich," of which he smilingly said that he did not know what was meant by it. These terms, which may perhaps be best rendered in English by *historical* and *historic* respectively, are explained by Bartsch as follows: "Historical means what is factual, historical facts; while whatever has influenced history is called *historic*," even though it may be a myth (p. 53). Thus one may say, in accordance with such terminology, that Santa Claus as represented in modern fiction is historic; while St. Nicolaus as he existed in fact was an historical person. Such a distinction, says Bartsch, "seems to make for progress"; it expedites modernism's work of deception and denial. Indeed, Bartsch criticises one theologian for not "understanding" the term "historic" as defined, and using it in the sense of *historical*, in speaking of Jesus. The death of Jesus, says Bartsch, was historical; but His resurrection is only historic! (We may here again call attention to the false insistence of some of our own liberal-minded spirits that it is not necessary to agree in terminology, that is, concerning the meaning of words; *c. g.*, as over against the American Lutheran Church when it defines the term "Church" modernistically as a visible thing when speaking of its essence in the strict sense of the word. This is contrary to 1 Cor. 1, 10 as well as to the Scriptural doctrine of the Church.)

Hand in hand with its false distinction between what is supposed to be historical and what is supposed to be merely historic go certain fictions of "literary motives" and "stylistic" considerations of the penmen of the New Testament with which German liberalism operates. And these in turn are supposed to be determined by an equally fictitious "kerygmatic" (preaching) value. That is to say, whether what the Apostles wrote is true

or false does not really matter; just so it provided a preaching which would effect a desired result through its influence on people. On the basis of such false premises, which are the determining factors in modern German theology, every new denial or doubt of Gospel truth is hailed as just so much progress (*Fortschritt*).

The net result of such liberal theology is that it reduces everything to the status of a problem (as Walther already reminded us). The entire labor of its "scholarship," which in some respects is a prodigious thing, resolves itself to a problematic "science" (*Problematik*). This invention of ever new problems in turn provides a constantly expanding playground for the genius of modernism, a happy-hunting-ground for its "research," — a pretended searching after truth, the finding of which it makes ever more impossible to itself. To change the picture, in Luther's homespun Saxon,

*'Der eine melkt den Bock,
der andre haelt das Sieb.'*

What a tragic sport!

We cannot help here calling attention to the fact that some of our own theologians have evidently been infected by the modernism with which they came into contact in their fraternization with German theological "scholarship." One hears not a little nowadays among certain St. Louis theologians about "problems" which are no problems at all, but once for all settled teachings of God's Word delivered to the saints to be believed and defended against unbelief, Jude 3. Compare, for instance, the heading "The Problem of the 'Visible' and the 'Invisible' Church" in *The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion* by President Behnken, — explained as "*die ganze Frage, die hineinschlaegt*!" (*Confessional Lutheran*, January, 1950, p. 11.) Does that not sound as though one were listening to a modern German theologian or bishop?

Dr. Bartsch enthusiastically shows that modern liberal theology's problematic science reaches its climax in the questioning of the great facts concerning the work of Christ for our salvation. He devotes the greatest amount of space to "the riddle of the New Testament," introduced as the title of a book by Sir Edwin Hoskyns and Noel Davey. This book was first published in England in 1931, translated into German in 1938, and appeared in an unaltered third English edition in 1947. *Bartsch points to the repeated publication of this book as proof that LIBERAL THEOLOGY IN EUROPE IS TODAY WHAT IT WAS BEFORE THE WAR.* We quote (p. 46): "If it was possible to let this third unaltered edition still appear also today, then there is shown in this fact, that in this book,

which represents the life work especially of the first-named author, the status of New Testament science is presented as it existed shortly before the outbreak of the War and as it appears, not essentially changed, up to today."

Speaking of "the riddle of the New Testament," Dr. Bartsch says: "Also during the years of the war we in any case did not come any closer to a solution of this riddle." And what is this "riddle"? It is the problem as to what is the relation of the faith of the primitive Church (*Urgemeinde*) to Jesus of Nazareth, or formulated differently, the relationship of the preaching (*kerygma*) of Jesus to history. This is the problem which accompanies the whole work of New Testament research as an open question and which still stands there as open as ever today. In all endeavors, also such as attempt to offer a solution, the riddle finally remains extant."

Particularizing somewhat on this "riddle" of the New Testament, Dr. Bartsch says: "This problem comes to light most clearly in the explanation of the story told by the synoptic Evangelists, on which the message of the whole New Testament rests. If the authors [Hoskyns and Davey] here begin, not with the synoptists themselves, but with the First Epistle of Peter, this will prove to be advantageous, inasmuch as the identical question here poses itself even more sharply. In 1 Pet. 2, 21ff the author portrays the suffering of Jesus as analogous to Is. 53. He therefore understands it under the very definite point of view of the Servant of God, the suffering of the Messiah, as the synoptists do in all of their accounts. The question which grows out of this is therefore to be directed not only to 1 Peter, but in like manner to the synoptists: Is this interpretation proper, that is to say, does it exist already in the life of Jesus, or does it owe its origin only to a theology of the Church (*Gemeinde-theologie*) which was added later?" (P. 47.)

Need we go on with this sort of thing? And to think that there should be those who are trying to induce us to view German theology in a more favorable light than we have been able to do this hitherto, because its old modernism is supposed to be dead! One is moved to wonder just where such misinformants (or is there just one of them? — we ourselves can think of only Dr. Theo. Graebner here) may have been, and precisely what they may have been doing, while abroad. Yet we need not wonder when we remember, as stated in the beginning, how much similar misinformation has been spread concerning conditions right here at home in the interest of the indifference and unionism for which certain liberal spirits have come to be known to stand.

We wish to add one more remark. Without the State support which it has always enjoyed,

we believe that the kind of theology which we have been reviewing could hardly be as widespread and general in Germany as it is today, as shown by its publications. For, everything else being equal, ordinary Christians should hardly be expected to shell out their consecrated money for such vile purposes. But we don't want to overlook the fact that a similar situation can result in a free church when its organizational machinery is permitted to become so complicated that nobody finally seems able to call anyone to account any longer. When we, amid a rapidly expanding bureaucracy and an ever increasingly impotent officialdom, can be told (as we are being told) that the old modernism is dead in Germany and that professed Lutherans should, contrary to Rom. 16, 17, be encouraged to affiliate with Reformed Christians in the "Evangelical" Church in Germany and by no means leave that sinful union, but patiently await its final outcome, a formidable start has already been made among us in that direction.

P. H. B.

❶ Distinctive Doctrines of the Evangelical Lutheran Church

Church Government

When the apostle Peter calls the Christians "a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:9), it is evident that the Church is to be subject only to God and His Word, and there is no other authority which the Church must obey by a divine right and obligation. Christ, the one and only Head of the Church, is alone the ruler of His mystical body, governing it through His Word. "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." (Matth. 23:8.) The Word of God is the lawbook to which the Church is bound. To that Word the Church is to yield implicit obedience in all things great or small, and the Church is never at liberty to reject or to set aside any word of Scripture. But under Christ and His Word the Church — and consequently each local congregation — is its own highest authority. In a very pronounced manner does the Lord constitute the congregation the final court when He says: "Tell it unto the Church: but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matth. 18:17.) The congregation is bound to obey Christ and His Word, and no one else.

When a congregation calls a pastor it makes it his duty to teach all things whatsoever Christ has commanded, but it does not make him its lord and master. When he preaches the truth of Scripture the congregation is to receive it "not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the

word of God" (1 Thess. 2:13), and it is to obey, not because the pastor preaches it, but because it is the Word of God, as the Lord says: "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." (Luke 10:16.) When a preacher steps down from the pulpit he is to be able to say freely: "Lord, thou knowest, the things that have gone forth out of my mouth are right before Thee," and when the congregation obeys, it is obeying Christ and not the pastor. The congregation which rejects a doctrine clearly taught in the Word of God, renders itself guilty of rebellion against God. "I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts." (Isaiah 65:2.) But the pastor has no authority to command or to forbid anything which Christ has not commanded or forbidden. In things pertaining to Christian liberty, such as ceremonies to be used in public worship, the pastor is to give advice and he may cast a vote, but when he undertakes to give commands the congregation is so far from being bound to obey, that it is rather enjoined to resist every attempt at introducing priestrule. "Ye know," says the Lord, "that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you, but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." (Matth. 20:25-27.) And Peter exhorts all pastors: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, not as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5:3.) The pastor is to be overseer and leader, but never is he to lord it over the congregation.

If the pastor is not to rule in the congregation, neither is the vestry or church council. The church council is elected and appointed by the congregation to perform certain functions, which may comprise a larger or a smaller circle, agreeably to the instructions of the congregations, but the church council is always to be held responsible to the congregation and ought never to be allowed to rule by its own authority. No congregation acts wisely if it gives its officers, severally or jointly, power to rule in the church after their own discretion.

If the officers appointed by the congregation are not to be lords over it, much less a conference, or synod, or consistory, or presbytery, or any larger assembly. A synod is composed of congregations that have united together in one organization for the purpose of accomplishing ends which can not or can not so well be accomplished

by single congregations. It is therefore only a human and not a divine institution. The representative assembly of a synod is composed of lay delegates, pastors and teachers, and is to have only advisory and no legislative powers. The representative assembly of a synod can, of course, legislate for itself by adopting rules and regulations for its own government, and it can also exclude those from its connections who will not submit to its regulations, but all this is done only by *human* authority. For the congregations the synod cannot legislate.

A congregation is free to connect with a synod or not, as it sees proper, and after it has entered into such a connection the congregation is not bound to any resolution of synod by a divine obligation, and no officer of synod has a right to say or do anything in a congregation except by the consent of that congregation. On the other hand the officers of synod as well as its representative assembly are bound to the decision of the congregation, and neither the officers nor the representative assembly have any right to override or to set aside a vote passed by the majority of the congregations composing the synod. The importance of these truths and the necessity for congregations to guard against the infringement of their rights and liberties is but too evident from the history of the Christian Church. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

In governing itself a congregation should always be mindful that matters of doctrine and conscience cannot be decided by majorities, but only by the Word of God. "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil, neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment." (Ex. 23:2.) And in matters subject to decision by majority all should guard against violating the law of brotherly love, being ready to yield to each other and "in honor preferring one another." For a majority simply to ignore a brother and to disregard his perhaps erring conscience is not in harmony with the spirit of Christianity and is against the command of the apostle "that no man put a stumbling block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way." (Rom. 14:13.)

On this the Book of Concord says: "We believe, teach, and confess, that in all places and at all times, the Church of God has authority and power, according to circumstances, to alter, to diminish, or to increase these ceremonies, if it is done decently and in order, without levity and offence, as it may at any time be deemed most useful, profitable, and conducive to good order, Christian discipline, evangelical propriety, and to the edification of the Church. And how far, in these outward and indifferent things, we can with good conscience concede and yield to the weak in faith,

Paul teaches, (Rom. 14:21) and indicates by his example." (Acts 16:3.) N. M., 2d ed., p. 706.

What our Confessions teach concerning church government is sufficiently shown by the following paragraph taken from the Appendix to the Smalcald Article on the Primacy of the Pope: "1 Cor. 3, 5, 6, 7, Paul equalizes all the ministers of the Church, and teaches that the Church is greater than its servants. For this reason no one can assert with truth, that Peter had any primacy or power superior to other apostles, or over the Church and all other ministers. For thus he says: 'All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas,' (1 Cor. 3:21), that is, neither Peter nor other ministers of the Word, have a right to assume to themselves power or superiority over the Church. No one shall encumber the Church with its own ordinances, and no one's power or reputation shall avail more than the Word of God. We dare not extol the power of Cephas higher than that of the other apostles, as they were accustomed to argue at that time, saying, Cephas observes it, who is the chief apostle, therefore Paul and others must thus observe it also. No, says Paul, and refutes the pretence, that Peter's reputation and authority should be superior to that of the other apostles, or of the Church." When the Confessions say, "that the Church is greater than its servants (*supra ministros*)," they declare in a specially significant manner that there is no higher authority than the congregation. The congregation is above the preacher, above the conference, above the synod.

By this doctrine our Church is distinguished:

(a) From the Romish sect, which claims that the pope is the vicar of Christ and the visible head of the Church, and that he rules with sovereign authority by divine right.

(b) From those who give authority to rule in the Church to bishops, or an assembly of bishops, as Methodists and Episcopalians do; or to the presbytery or classis, as the Calvinists do, and all who place any authority above the congregation. The Westminster (Presbyterian) Confession says, Chapter XXX, Section I: "The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, hath therein appointed a government in the hands of Church officers," and it gives these officers the power even to excommunicate from the Church.

In connection with this doctrine the argument is frequently advanced that congregations are free to transfer the right to rule them to a higher authority, and that, if they have once done so, they are then bound to submit to the authority which they themselves created. This would imply, if the churches in a province have created a consistory they are then bound to obey that con-

sistory; or if congregations have organized a synod with hierarchical powers they are then bound to submit to the decrees or resolutions of that synod. This is a specious argument, but it does nevertheless not hold good, because the Bible nowhere says, that Christians shall be free to surrender their liberties. Paul on the contrary says: "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." (Gal. 5:1.) Again he says: "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." (1 Cor. 7:23.) And the Lord (Luke 22:25) says: "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; but ye shall not be so." It is certainly not the will of the Lord that Christians should create a power to rule over His heritage. To men it may seem that under a strong government the Church must be more aggressive and flourishing, but experience shows that a strong government is but too prone to degenerate into tyranny and oppression of conscience, and experience likewise proves that the Church is most keenly alive to its duties where the rights and liberties of the congregations are guarded most scrupulously. The congregation which is alive to its privileges will also be alive to its duties.

F. KUEGELE

(In *Lutheran Witness*, official organ of the English Synod of Missouri, Vol. 21 [1902], pp. 138-140.)

ON THE UNION FRONT

1949 All-Lutheran Seminars, Continued

Our correspondent at the Sioux Falls, S. Dak., Seminar, September 29, reports that there were "a number of pleas, all but one of them by Missouri Synod pastors, for conferences where misunderstandings may be cleared up and actual differences may be discussed on the basis of the Word of God. (The Missouri Synod men numbered almost a third of those attending — from six synods in all — and took the leading part in the afternoon's discussions.) No definite arrangements for such conferences were forthcoming, but the consensus was arrived at that all the men present would be open to anyone's invitation for such a conference."

Austin, Texas

"Outnumbered were the ULC pastors at the Inter-Lutheran Seminar at Austin. Missouri pastors used them as a target for finger pointing, telling all present that the ULCA were bad Lutherans and must mend their ways, and were the

cause of much of the disunity of the Lutheran Church in America. Pastors Speaker, convener and host of the meeting, and Frank Broesicke defended the position of the ULCA. There was no bitterness shown. It was decided to continue discussions, including prayer fellowship." (*The Lutheran*, news magazine of the United Lutheran Church, December 21, 1949, p. 48.)

Houston, October 19

One of the speakers, the Rev. Joseph Knutson of the American Lutheran Conference, did not desire to be "controversial" and "discuss differences." Missouri Synod men in attendance insisted that this ought to be done. The meeting was opened with the usual devotions.

Philadelphia, September 28

The Rev. F. W. Loose, Missouri Synod, read an essay on the first subtopic of the Seminars, "God Gives Christ and His Church." He brought in several doctrines. According to our correspondent, he spoke well on the veracity of Scripture. "In reply to a question as to whether all historical and scientific statements in the Bible are thus inspired the essayist emphatically answered that they are . . . and that logically he must accept every statement in the Bible, or none, because, if a book, including the Bible, is unreliable on one point, it is so on every point; there is no saying where the line between truth and untruth in the Bible is to be drawn." But the Statementarian leaven did seep in. For instance, among the speaker's introductory remarks were the following: "I believe that all that is necessary in our country is that we get together and look at one another." "We ought to work ourselves up into the conviction that we are one Lutheran Church." Lutheran differences were labeled "minor points."

Jottings

The proposed merger of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norwegian merger), the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the American Lutheran Church, was approved by large majorities at five District conventions of the American Lutheran Church, according to the *Lutheran Standard*.

Dr. Yngve Brilioth recently became Archbishop of Uppsala and Primate of the Swedish State Church, which is nominally Lutheran. He succeeded Archbishop Erling Eidem. *Lutheran Herald* (March 28, p. 317) remarked: "The new archbishop is known for his broad ecumenical contacts with other large church bodies, particularly with the Church of England and Eastern Orthodox Churches, and for his studies of medieval Swedish

Church history. Dr. Brilioth is a son-in-law of the late Archbishop Nathan Soderblom."

A. V. K.

● Augustana Lutherans Moving Toward "Left"

Washington, D. C. — With only four out of 400 delegates dissenting the Augustana Lutheran Church voted here to become one of the charter bodies of the National (Federal) Council of Churches of Christ in the United States.

By this precedent-shattering action, the Augustana Church became the first Lutheran body to enter into full membership in a national inter-church organization since Lutheranism came to America more than 300 years ago. It is believed that the United Lutheran Church, which meets in October, will take similar action.

Also after lengthy debate the Augustana synod voted 166 to 80 to instruct its college administrators to "exercise close supervision over dancing." Fourteen speakers participated in the debate, which was one of the most intense witnessed in years at an Augustana convention.

Interested evangelical observers believed these actions marked a decided "liberal" turn in the affairs of this Lutheran body.

United Evangelical Action (July 1, 1950).

● Review of Publications

We Beheld His Glory: Sermons for the Advent Season, Christmas and New Year's Day. By Pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. 242 pages, 5½×8 inches. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. \$2.00.

What Seek Ye? Sermons for the Season after Christmas. 271 pages. \$2.25.

Unto a Living Hope. Sermons for the Season after Easter. 294 pages. \$2.50.

In Whom We Live. The First of Three Books of Trinity Sermons. 313 pages. \$2.75.

Teach Me Thy Paths. The Second of Three Books of Trinity Sermons. 322 pages. \$2.75.

For This Cause. The Third of Three Books of Trinity Sermons. 311 pages. \$2.75.

By the Obedience of One. Pre-Lenten and Lenten Sermons. 340 pages. \$2.75.

Augsburg Publishing House, the official publication concern of the so-called (Norwegian merger) "Evangelical Lutheran Church," has in these seven volumes issued a collection of sermons covering the church year. The texts on which

the sermons are based and which are printed out in full, are the texts of the ancient pericopal gospels and two other series of gospels which are in use in the "Evangelical Lutheran Church." Thus there are three separate sermons for each festival and Sunday, the only exceptions being Christmas Day and Good Friday, for each of which there is but a single sermon.

Various members of the clergy of the "Evangelical Lutheran Church" have contributed to these volumes, — professors, ministers in executive positions, pastors in large centers and in small communities, missionaries at home and abroad. Thus one has a cross-section of preaching here as one might hear it nearly any Sunday in the "Evangelical Lutheran Church."

As might be expected, the sermons under consideration vary somewhat, not only as to style, but also as to merit, though there is a general tone that runs through them all. In general, the themes are neither particularly striking nor offensively sensational. The main parts of the sermon outlines are often not formally announced. Indeed, sometimes the sermons are not at all formal in the homiletical sense. Occasionally they are rather in the style of an essay. Texts are usually not penetrated too deeply, and there is not great emphasis on their doctrinal content. The "line" that is generally followed is that of Christian life and love presented in the framework of the subjective conception and reflection of the respective individual preacher.

A pastor of the "Evangelical Lutheran Church," himself a contributor to this series, suggests that it might be made a basis of study in preaching. Some of the conclusions which he himself has come to are as follows: "Some few pastors have studied no theology since graduation from the seminary, and what they learned there has gradually become hazy recollection rather than profound knowledge; some few are guilty of preaching without a defined goal; there is some justification for saying that social awareness crowds out, too often, theological thoroughness."

We ourselves have found the Reformed influence rather strong in this collection of sermons, and there are not a few aberrations from Scriptural truth. Thus, in the first volume, it is said with reference to the Old Testament: "During *many millenniums* uncounted voices had been crying in the wilderness of sin, searching for a Deliverer." P. 125. Our emphasis.) It is said that the baptism of John "could not confer that spiritual life by which renewed men are enabled 'to mortify the deeds of the body.'" P. 130.) God made man "*because He was lonely*." (Pp. 172. 174.) "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29, 18, "vision" clearly referring

to the Word of God) is used as though it meant no more than that "there must be horizons that beckon." (P. 185.) Christians are not described as they should be described when they are simply *identified with the world* in its estrangement from God, as follows: "Humanity has been trying to persuade itself that it is an animal. *We* have even bluntly and succinctly put it down in black and white that 'man is an animal.' Having pounded that home with fiendish glee, *we* have proceeded to act like animals." (P. 204. Our emphasis.)

Far from there being any Scriptural foundation for what is stated on p. 110 of the second volume in this series, it is contrary to what Holy Scripture teaches about original sin to say: "When a child is brought to God in Holy Baptism, the Holy Spirit, who alone works salvation in adult or infant, *meets no resistance or self-righteousness in the child's heart* and is able to enter that heart and impart a new life, to justify, to regenerate, and to make the child a member of the kingdom."

In an otherwise commendable sermon in the third volume, which applies the text John 21, 1-14 allegorically to the Christian's life, the false statement is repeatedly made that, *after Easter*, Peter and the rest of the disciples "felt that the whole chapter of Jesus was over and they would never see him again." (P. 11f.) The same sermon speaks repeatedly of *feeling* the presence of Jesus. (Pp. 17, 19, 25.) A good word is put in for false ecumenicity (outward, unionistic organization) as we are told to "Look at the great conferences of Christians from all over the world!" (P. 48.) A particularly poor sermon on pp. 63-69 contains more bad theology than we can take space to point out in this brief review. No matter how much charity one musters up, it is impossible to make acceptable the following statement: "Of course man cannot understand sin! It is a fact that has to become a reality only as one allows the Holy Spirit to convict him of its presence in his own life." (P. 111.) In a sermon which enthusiastically refers to the radical Reformed theologian, Emil Brunner, as "the great European theologian," (p. 130), the following is embodied: "Dick Sheppard once said to a friend, 'I don't believe I know anything about faith, but I have a love for men somewhere within me. I hang unto that.' This love was inspired by Christ." (P. 126.) Also this bit of untruth: "Men today are not opposed to Christ so much as they are disgusted by the poor copies of Christian living they see about them." (P. 127.) Wrong ideas, no doubt millennialistic, underlie the following statements concerning John 17, 18-23: "Into the mass of human life has Chris-

tian truth fallen unheralded and as softly as the dews of evening form on summer grass; but there it is doing its work whether scaled eyes see the fact of it or not. Slowly but surely it is influencing the whole. As God sent Christ into the world, even so He is sending us into the world; and however humble we might be, in our hand there is — a bit of heaven! *Slowly, possibly, is the kingdom coming, but surely.* This Christ of God has not failed. Nor will he let us fail." (P. 162. Our emphasis.) The same thought is found in another sermon, when it is said with reference to love as "the very essence of Christ's will for us all": "Here we get a glimpse of the Kingdom of God, which He came to bring and which the Spirit is busily engaged in ushering in. *And it is coming slowly but surely.*" (P. 291. Our emphasis.)

In the fourth volume of this collection anyone who believes in the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Holy Scripture must reject the teaching found on p. 38: "The Bible is a human book, written by men in human words, *subject to all human limitations*, and yet through this book God's Spirit can reveal Jesus Christ, the Word of God." (Our emphasis.) Statements made concerning the portrayal of heaven and hell by our Lord, on p. 44, make one wonder whether the author has forgotten the last chapters of the Revelation. Tithing raises its legalistic head to plague the reader on p. 85. On p. 240 a false explanation is given of Mt. 5, 19a ("He shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven"), which is referred to as a "puzzling expression." In a sermon on "Hindrances to a Growing Faith," the intelligent, sincere Christian will find one such hindrance in the statement: "I like the story of the farmer who during the haying season stayed home to take in his hay. During the week the pastor called and in conversation stated that he had missed the farmer at services the past Sunday. The farmer replied, 'Well, pastor, I thought it would be better for me to be out in the field thinking about my church and its message than to be in church thinking about my hay in the field.' The man had something there, didn't he?" (P. 267. The viciousness of this statement is somewhat mitigated by others just following, but by no means satisfactorily.)

In the fifth volume, man's divine image is said to have been "marred by sin" (rather than *lost*), and of the two men who went up into the temple to pray it is said: "They were both created in the image of God. By reason of that image, though marred by sin, they were capable of high achievements of thought, deep emotions, and significant choices. For them fellowship with God was also

possible." (P. 71, 69.) False teaching concerning the sabbath will be found on p. 308.

It should strike the Christian reader as strange beyond belief to think of Solomon (speaking by inspiration) as being classed with "skeptics and unbelievers," yet precisely that thing is done in the sixth volume of this series, where one reads: "We have no dearth of skeptics and unbelievers. Macbeth says, 'Life is a tale, told by an idiot.' 'Death is better,' says Heine. 'Life is a jest,' cries the cynic. Solomon says, 'Vanity of vanities.'" Etc. (P. 15.) Questions of race and religion are confused in the manner of modern fanatics on pages 70, where it is said of the guests at the Great Marriage Feast (Mt. 22, 1-14): "Among them were many against whom some churches would draw the color line"; and on p. 92, where it is said: "We owe the Jew democratic tolerance, a Christian hand of brotherhood." On pp. 102 a false hope is proclaimed for this world, and Scripture is (we hope unwittingly) wrested in the interest of the author's fallacies, when it is said: "Is our world irretrievably bad? Is there no hope for it? To answer either yes or no is dangerous. It is as bad as an 'incurable' disease, which we call incurable because we do not know the cure. Yet, to call it curable does not mean that we can put on a little salve, or take a little exercise, and it will soon be all right. How powerful is the Word of God? Can it save today? Without a question it promises the mansions of heaven to those who believe in Christ. Can the power of Christ go beyond this and save not only for eternity but save for time? Christendom must face this problem in our perplexed, warring world of today. Someone will say that the prophecies of Scripture point to the fact that there shall be wars and rumors of wars, and forget that it is said 'the end is not yet'." The reference is to Mt. 24, 6 (or Mk. 13, 7.) Christ there goes on to say: "For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. . . . All these are the *beginning* of sorrows," etc. (Mt. 24, 7-14ff. Our emphasis.) But the author of the sermon under discussion goes on to say: "God offers a time of grace even beyond our tendency to confine and condemn. God sent Jonah to tell Nineveh that it should be destroyed, but when it repented He spared it. To say that it was eventually destroyed is to lose the point and power of the Word of God; for God has laid down an Eternal Law in Deut. 30 that the nation which follows God shall live, but if it forgets Him it shall die. Don't let a false 'realism' rob you of the promise of God that today we can have life, that God can make this world live." There is again more confusion of thought and false teaching here than we can take space to point out in

this brief review. The author of the sermon is a missionary in China.

Every intelligent Christian who knows his Bible at all should recognize the anti-Scriptural character of the statement on p. 251: "If the Christian Church is to complete all the tasks assigned to her in this world, it will be a long time before the second coming of Christ."

In the last volume, the text for the sermon for Good Friday (John 18, 1-19, 30), containing the whole Passion story from the crossing of the Kidron to Christ's bowing His head in death, is actually almost as long as the sermon on it itself. We call attention to this fact, not to find fault with this procedure, but to have the reader weigh its practicability, as an exceptional procedure on such a particular occasion, according to circumstances. It is customary to read extended portions of the account of the Passion and Death of our Lord and Savior according to (a harmony of) the four Evangelists in mid-week Lenten services. Perhaps the text in question is meant to be read at the lectern as the Lesson for the day rather than from the pulpit immediately before the sermon, even though it is to serve as a basis for the latter.

Does the fact that Mary "found favor with God," that she was highly favored, blessed among women, mean that in God's "perfect judgment, Mary was considered most worthy of this position of highest favor" of all the millions of women, from among whom God, who does not err, selected her? (P. 210.) The statement that "no one can approach the Lord's Table without entering into judgment," as presented on p. 271, hardly seems sufficiently clear.

A sermon on the Parable of the Sower (Luke 8, 4-15), "Where Is the Fault?" is badly off in a doctrinal way. Universal grace is misused to deny the election of grace. The nature and ability of each type of human heart here depicted, it is said, "was not predestined to be *good* or bad." (P. 39. Our emphasis.) And again, the natural corruption of the human heart is denied when it is said that God "has endowed every soul with a natural affinity for His saving Word. If that natural affinity is guarded and cultivated, if the good soil of a man's soul is properly tilled, fruit unto salvation will be the result." (P. 39.) And again: "The soil of the human heart is good as created by God." (P. 39; our emphasis.)

On page 31 Dr. Albert Einstein, the famous scientist, is quoted as saying that "two per cent. of the Christian people of the world could outlaw war if they had a mind to do so." (This would mean possibly 25,000,000 people.) Why not? Two people could do that, for that matter, if they had a mind to. But to enforce such a "law"

would be another matter. And then, what is more important, is it the Church's business to legislate interference with the *just* use of the sword by a government which has been empowered with it by God and ordained in its own sphere just as surely as the Church has been divinely instituted to mind its own business, — the spiritual care of immortal souls? (Romans 13, 1-4.)

We believe that preaching, not only in the "Evangelical Lutheran Church" as evidenced by these volumes, but in Lutheran churches generally today is not on as high a level as it might be and should be. Honest criticism should be welcomed and should, under God, make for better preaching. Most important of all, the many aberrations from Christian doctrine which lie before us in the preaching contained in these volumes are like so many open sores on the confessional body of the "Evangelical Lutheran Church." It is this kind of thing that is more and more dividing Lutherans (also *within* the ELC) today. No amount of preaching and testimony to the contrary, such as will be found also within these books, so long as error is persistently permitted to remain alongside of it, can hope to change that fact; Rom 16, 17.

P. H. B.

❶ What Our Readers Say

"You are doing an excellent job. Keep it up and may God bless your efforts!" — Pastor Missouri.

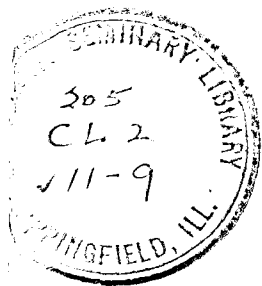
"I don't want to miss a single copy of the *Confessional Lutheran*. May the Lord continue to bless the testimony of this paper!" — Pastor Minnesota.

"We just can't let things go on as they have been going. God bless your testimony! We know that the Church (*una sancta*) is a unit now; Unionists are tearing it apart by their efforts at unionism." — Pastor, Illinois.

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD



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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

SEPTEMBER, 1950

NUMBER 9

IN THIS ISSUE: The Lutheran Church and the Apocrypha — Preaching As It Should Not Be — Missouri's Road to Ruin — Luther's Earliest Account of the Marburg Colloquy — Testifying Against Modernism — Judgment Day — Review of Publications — Neglecting Justification in our Preaching — The Most Evident Sign of Corruption — What Our Readers Say.

● The Lutheran Church and the Apocrypha

At a pastoral conference one of the "44," to the dismay of his brethren uttered the opinion that the Lutheran Church has never been clear about the difference between the canonical and the apocryphical books of the Bible. As proof he offered the use which is made in the Confessional Books of our Church of apocryphical passages.

It is true that in the very beginning of the Reformation all who had been under the pope, Luther himself not excepted, accepted everything

that was taught by the Church of Rome, even purgatory and the apocryphical books as a part of the Bible. The full knowledge of the revealed truth did not come to them all at once but gradually. One truth after the other came to light; one error after the other was eliminated. But none of these errors crept into the official Confessional Books of our church. Never has the Lutheran Church tried to prove the truth of a doctrine by quoting a passage from the apocrypha.

There are a few places in the Apology where passages of the Book of Tobiah and of II Macc. are mentioned. But for what purpose? Not to

Luther's translation of the Old Testament was completed in 1534. When the apocryphical books also were added to the Protestant editions of the Bible they were introduced with the remark: "These are books which are not held equal with the Bible, yet useful and good to read." This difference between the Holy Scriptures as the inspired Word of God and the Apocrypha as an appendix not equal to the Bible has since that time ever been upheld by the Lutheran Church. The assertion that the Lutheran Church has never been clear as to the difference between the canonical and the apocryphical books of the Bible is unfounded. Any and all talk of unclearness here must be directed against those who make such uncalled for assertions.

J. B.

❶ Preaching As It Should Not Be

In the little volume, *Thy King Cometh*, Pastor Fred Lindemann has submitted fourteen sermons for festivals and other occasions. There are four sermons for Advent, one each for Christmas Eve, Maundy Thursday, Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost, a Young People's Service, and All Saints Day; three sermons on subjects for non-festival days complete the collection. As to form these sermons are for the most part "talks," loosely arranged, without a specially announced theme and parts, except in the case of the last one of them. (Dr. Fritz has called them homilies.) As to content there is much that is fine in these sermons and that still shows that the author has enjoyed the advantage of being theologically schooled within the Missouri Synod at the feet of some of its outstanding teachers of the past. But here, too, aberrations from the Scriptural teaching and confession of his Church are everywhere in evidence.

We have in a previous article already referred to various aberrations concerning "the Body of Christ" in these sermons. (Nov., 1949.) To this we would yet add the author's representing the Lord as saying to the communicant: "Here is something tangible for somebody who finds it hard to believe unless the senses are engaged. The one sense of hearing may not be enough. Therefore also feel and taste and see and even smell"; (P. 77f.)

Some "Beastly" Theology

Considered as a whole, the sermon for a Young People's Service (pp. 97-106) is perhaps the most confused in the whole lot. 1 Cor. 12, 20-27 ("Many Members — One Body") is announced as a text, but not really utilized, except toward the close of the discourse. Actually the

words of our Lord concerning the Signs of the Times, Mt. 16, 2-3, which are also quoted at the beginning of the introduction, constitute the basis of the greater part of the address. As he discusses various signs of the times in some detail, Pastor Lindemann says: "Scripture foretells the rise of a great world-power, called the Beast, immediately before the end. It is an enterprise with God left out and man arrogating to himself the place of God. *It seems we are not far enough along the way to say definitely what this Beast is.* Fascism answers the description. So does Communism. So does Democracy, when you mean by it that the people are sovereign and not subject to God under law. We are told that in the day of the Beast no man may buy or sell unless he has the mark of the number of the Beast. It requires no unusual strain on the imagination to picture this state of affairs." (P. 100; our emphasis.) Later he says: "There is a tremendous conflict ahead. God has told us that the Antichrist of the last days will deceive many and prevail on many to be assimilated to his cause. Recent developments force us to see that one way of deception is the Beast's pretensions to humanitarianism. This deception parades under the name of Social Gospel. It minimizes Christ's power to save, and aims to usher in the Kingdom of social reforms. Good men become impatient with the slowness of the Gospel method and in their zeal support the totalitarian measures, in the hope of saving the world from its own greed and cruelty. . . . We have nothing to do with the Beast who holds out salvation by other means." (P. 104.) And again: "In these days of girding for the final battle a young man or woman dare not say to other members of Christ's Body: 'I do not need your help and encouragement and co-operation in resisting the Beast and winning the good fight.' This lone-wolf attitude over against fellow-Christians is not only dangerous but utterly selfish. Dangerous because a lone member is unable to serve Christ and His cause effectively. Experience teaches that the man who says to the members of Christ's Body, 'I have no need of you but find all I need with the world,' is on the way over to the other side, is not functioning as a part of Christ's Body." (P. 105.) What a crooked and confused picture! Many strokes of the brush cannot suffice to correct it; one stroke through the whole of it will prove sufficient. One must wonder if the author himself knows what he wants to say. If he does, one cannot help wondering if he hesitates to speak more plainly for fear that this would make his erroneous notions still more palpable than they already are.

There is considerably more of this sort. On p. 106, e. g., the author places "our youth groups"

above the congregation. And the reader will realize the confusion and resultant nonsense in statements like the following: "Men have been hoping and striving for unreal things. To continue so will be disastrous. International peace, racial peace, industrial peace, economic prosperity, as we have conceived them, are not realities. Social and economic relationships can be disturbed and disrupted, and *anything that can change is not a reality.*" (P. 127; our emphasis.)

The Last Error Worse Than The First?

The text on which the last sermon in Pastor Lindemann's present book is supposed to be based, Rev. 5, 9-10, speaks of the great redemption through Christ by which He made men out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation a kingdom and priests (the One Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints), who reign on earth throughout this New Testament age, — a thought which occurs again and again in the Revelation as well as elsewhere in Scripture. But Pastor Lindemann, in the manner of millennialists, in the last part of this sermon, speaks of what has already been going on all this while as a yet unfulfilled hope to be realized in some future day, saying: "The time is coming when this power (this rule of the world) will be revealed to all astonished unbelievers and we shall reign on the earth." (P. 143.) In that strain he concludes his sermon and his book with the following appeal: "If the world is to be saved, if men are to realize that they are brothers and sisters in Christ, if the Kingdom of Service is to be established, if faith and love are to rule the world, somebody must be willing to give his life, to die. This can never be done through a soft and pampered and ease-loving Church. So we come this morning for a fresh baptism of heroism. As we remember our Lord's death for us He seems to say, 'How far will you go for Me who went all the way for you?' If our Communion has the effect the Lord intends, a group of very determined Christians will leave this house of God this morning. The kingdom of God will have come closer. The new song of the redeemed before God's throne will become our song, and we shall resolve that it shall sing itself around the earth, and, as far as we are concerned, the Lamb that was slain will have come into His own." (P. 144.) Every intelligent reader and faithful Bible student should realize the confusion and false notions concerning the Kingdom of God (the Church) and its expectations which are wrapped up in this final appeal.

Once more we ask: How much of this sort of thing does the presidium of the Missouri Synod expect its members to put up with? And how

long does it suppose such abuse, offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, can be borne?

P. H. B.

② Missouri's Road To Ruin

Speaking of the abuse of the Lord's Supper before the Reformation, our Reformation fathers have said (and we join them in their declaration), in the Augsburg Confession, Art. XXIV: "Neither were the bishops ignorant of these abuses, and if they had corrected them in time, there would now be less dissension. Heretofore, by their own connivance, they have suffered many corruptions to creep into the Church. Now, when it is too late, they begin to complain of the troubles of the Church, while this disturbance has been occasioned simply by those abuses which were so manifest that they could be borne no longer." (*Conc. Trigl.*, p. 67.)

A similar situation obtains within the Missouri Synod today. Under the policy of its present presidium the synod has had to suffer the humiliation of being publicly plagued by one aberration from the truth after another in matters of doctrine and practice. Among these are the errors of the *Lutheran Witness* concerning the doctrine of the Church and church-fellowship, unionism, and others. The errors of the signers of the Chicago Statement have been permitted to remain at issue through a 'gentleman's disagreement' known as the Ft. Wayne Agreement, by the president and the "44." The public errors of sacramentalists like Pastors B. von Schenk and Fred Lindemann are another case in point. (It is the fact that we have been requested to review the latter's latest publication that has moved us to pen these lines.) By their own connivance our officials have suffered many corruptions to creep into our church. Now, at a late day, they have begun to complain about the troubles of our church. But the disturbances among us have been occasioned simply by abuses which are so manifest that they could be borne no longer. The approach of the presidium to the whole problem of liberalism in our midst, its *failures to correct such abuses in time*, has long ago shown itself to be the most prolific source of dissension among us. Such a policy has demonstrated itself over and over again to be a fatal mistake and the swiftest road to confessional ruin.

Such a policy is contrary to the spirit of the Reformation. We are children of the Reformation. Let us prove ourselves such. Let everyone who loves our church protest that such abuses as those of which we have been speaking cannot continue to be borne. We are also Missourians.

The very first object of the Missouri Synod is "the conservation and promotion of the unity of the true faith (Eph. 4, 3-6; 1 Cor. 1, 10) and a united defense against schism and sectarianism (Rom. 16, 17)," (Art. III, 1.) The President of the Missouri Synod has no higher duty than that "he shall conscientiously use all means at his command to promote and maintain unity of doctrine and practice in all the Districts of Synod," in accordance with its constitution. (Art. XI, B, 3.) "Synod at all times has the right to call its officers to account." (Art. XI, A, 2.) Let us not fail to use this right (much less permit it to be denied us) lest we by virtue of such default become guilty of sharing responsibility for the dissension which is tearing our church asunder. As concerns its administration, the Missouri Synod has in its By-Laws to its Constitution more particularly committed itself expressly to the principle of "admitting the right of free expression and of public appeal as an inherent right of its members." (Latest Synodical Handbook, 2.109b; p. 51). This right which the Lord Himself has put into the hands of everyone of us with the gift of the Gospel entails an awful responsibility.

It is up to you and me not only evangelically to testify against current abuses in our synod, but also to use our inherent right of free expression and of public appeal to protest the policy of not correcting in time abuses which, if continued, must prove themselves once again the surest and swiftest road to complete confessional decay and ruin.

P. H. B.

❶ Luther's Earliest Account Of The Marburg Colloquy

DR. P. E. KRETZMANN

Since the opinion has occasionally been expressed, also in Lutheran circles, that the conduct of Luther at Marburg showed a vicious and vindictive spirit, it should be of some value to all lovers of the truth to examine some of the documents which throw light on this crisis in early Protestant history. And not a little importance attaches to the fact that there is a significant parallel between the events at Marburg and the historical developments growing out of them, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the situation in the Synodical Conference, and specifically in the Missouri Synod today.

During the year 1529 Luther had been preaching regularly on the Book of Deuteronomy. He had advanced to the end of chapter 6 when he was obliged to interrupt his series on account of his attendance at the Marburg Colloquy, during the first days of October. Immediately after his

return, however, he resumed his sermonic expositions and it is interesting to find that he felt it advisable to inform his people about the outcome of this momentous debate. The account is included in his exposition, under the subject: "Narrative of Dr. Martin Luther from the pulpit, concerning his journey to Marburg and the conversation held there with the Sacramentarians." (St. Louis Ed., 3, 1769f.)

We quote the most important sections of this brief account:

"You are undoubtedly anxious to know what we accomplished at Marburg, so in order that you may not be left in doubt, and that you also may stop the mouth of the blasphemers, I shall briefly tell you of this transaction . . .

"Concerning original sin we are not in agreement. Otherwise they have yielded in some six or seven points and have accepted them, as concerning the baptism of children, of justification, of the value and the use of the Lord's Supper, and in these points of the Word of God they are in agreement with us, and have willingly abandoned their former teaching; and they admit that faith and comfort is received in the Sacrament. But that the body and the blood of Christ are present truly and corporally, that they cannot yet believe. . . .

"Fellowship they requested of us; but this for the present we have refused, and could not promise them. For if we should regard them as brothers and sisters, we should have to consent to their doctrine. Although this refusal was not readily acknowledged by them and they offered the pretext that love should be shown them until God would bring them around, since we should love even our enemies (Matt. 5:44). Well, he who wants to draw false conclusions may do so; and he who can do more, let him do more. They insist upon their opinion, — may God enlighten them. . . .

"They confess that those who go to the Holy Communion, there truly receive the body and blood of Christ, but spiritually, so that they have Christ in their hearts. To receive Him bodily, that they will not concede, and so we have placed it upon their conscience. For we have the Word of God and the text on our side, which they do not have. Therefore the matter permits of some good hope. I do not say that there is brotherly unity, but a pleasant, friendly concord, that they, in a friendly way seek from us what is missing with them, and that we serve them. Now if you will diligently pray, the concord will become brotherly."

There are several points to be noted with regard to this report:

1. History tends to repeat itself, also in the matter of doctrinal controversies;
2. Luther *informed his people* on this important issue;
3. He was not vindictive, nor did he make it a personal matter;
4. But he presented an adamant front over against error;
5. He would not consent to church fellowship without true unity of confession and faith, even in the case of a so-called non-fundamental doctrine.

● Testifying Against Modernism

We have previously reviewed Dr. Hans-Werner Bartsch's *Manual of Evangelical-Theological Work*, 1938-1948, showing the extent and the viciousness of Modernism in Germany today. (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, March, 1950, pp. 30-32; Aug., 1950, pp. 92-94.)

Our Free Church brethren in Germany are quite awake to the situation that confronts them, — and us. They are testifying against Modernism, especially as it is found among Lutherans and such as are associated with Lutherans in the EKID (*Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* — the "Evangelical Church in Germany"). In Vol. 4, No. 2 (February, 1950) of the *Lutheraner*, official paper of our Free Church brethren in Germany, Pastor Friedrich Seefeldt of the Ev.-Luth. Kirche Altpreußens (Breslau Synod) discussed a recent publication, the author of which is Dr. Rudolf Bultmann, professor of theology at Marburg, and the title of which is *Taking the Mythology Out of New Testament Preaching* (*Entmythologisierung der neutestamentlichen Verkündigung*). This review again shows the depths to which Modernism is descending in Germany today.

In view of the amazing assertion of Dr. Theo. Graebner, that the old Modernism is dead in Germany today, we shall here publish Pastor Seefeldt's article in its entirety, in translation, as follows:

"The conflict against the preaching of the Gospel on the basis of the New Testament message has not, as some may suppose, ceased in Germany with the disappearance of a reign of anti-Christian force, but it has in our day rather found new protagonists. This time, however, the attack emanates not from within the ranks of the familiar opponents of the Christian Church, but from within its own camp. With the external foe of the Church there is once again associated the foe within, who is pursuing his work of

destruction in the Church under the pretense of scholarly theological research, and thereby, consciously or unconsciously, treacherously working hand-in-hand with Christ's foes.

"It is the work of Rudolf Bultmann, Professor of Theology at Marburg, 'Taking the Mythology Out of New Testament Preaching' (*Entmythologisierung der neutestamentlichen Verkündigung*) that concerns us. Professor Bultmann pursues a method of critical examination, by which he, like an anatomist, removes one layer of myth after another from the historic substance of the New Testament with the dissecting-knife in order finally to get at the kernel of truth which is supposed to lie hidden under all of the formations of myth by which it has been covered over.

"In the opinion of Dr. Bultmann the reality of the historical existence of Jesus has by the pious phantasy of His adherents been overgrown with a many-layered formation of myth which stems from ancient tradition and legend, by which a clear view and the right understanding of the work of Jesus has been veiled and falsified for us. It is now the problem of New Testament theological 'science' to separate the New Testament from all of its spurious parts, to free it from the wrappings with which it has been covered over, in order thus finally to be able to offer to modern man the basic substance of ultimate Christian truth corresponding to his ideas of the present world structure with its natural laws. All supernatural appearances of angels at the beginning of the story of Jesus, the phantastically pious 'Christmas legend' are to be separated from it as well as are the miracles, all occurrences which transcend the senses, representations of a devil, and accounts of demons. Representations of demons in the New Testament are supposed to be bare superstition and are not to be dished up in the modern world anymore, but are to be rooted out by the Church as soon as possible. The thought of redemption by Christ's death on the Cross and the stories of miracles in the resurrection accounts which have sprung from an overwrought phantasy are supposed to be stricken from the New Testament message as are the mythical visions of the Apostle Paul and the Revelation of St. John.

"The picture of the Person of Jesus which then still remains is that of the rationalistic man of the twentieth century. The picture of Jesus is to be tailored to and made acceptable to a man of our day who persists in a shallow rationalistic faith and superficial enlightenment. No more than this remains if one accepts the New Testament theology of Bultmann and his following. A consummation of the world by the return of Christ for Judgment is naturally rejected with the

greatest scorn. The history of the world has continued until now, and will continue, as 'every responsible' person is convinced. Still greater liberalism in a theological chair of the Evangelical Church in Germany is hardly possible.

"And Bultmann is being praised for this by a host of disciples, adherents, and friends. This fact was again only recently given expression in extravagant words in a festive publication dedicated to him in which his work is represented as the most significant product of scholarship. (At the moment his influence on students in Goettingen and Heidelberg is very great.)

"One has to ask how it is possible that public silence is maintained by the Church in view of such a thing. (Dr. Theo. Graebner is doing far worse, in trying to tell us, in the interest of his own unionistic activities in Europe, that the old modernism is dead in Germany, and that faithful Lutherans are by no means to leave the association of such heretics as Prof. Bultmann, who is in the service of the EKID. — P. H. B.) Here there is being aimed at the roots of Christian faith one stroke after another to which no theologian who is conscious of his responsibility and no Christian who is concerned about the foundation of his faith can remain silent. We must earnestly warn evangelical Christendom in Germany against such reprehensible seduction to unbelief through this liberal professor of theology and his adherents, as the Apostle warns against antichrists. (I John 2, 18.)

"We, however, want to be thankful to God, our Lord, with all our heart for the fact that in our Lutheran Church Scriptural preaching alone, 'built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone' (Eph. 2, 20) is permitted. And what the Apostle Paul writes to his pupil Timothy, 'But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of' (II Tim. 3, 14) shall until the end of our life remain our guiding slogan. To the end of the world the Church has the promise: 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His.' (II Tim. 2, 19.)"

If there is anything that is dead about the theology by which we are confronted today, it is not the old evil foe of Modernism in Germany. Indeed, we shall not have to go as far as Germany to find what it is that is dead. What is dead today is the forceful testimony against Modernism and the healthy theological acumen which, to the delight of all lovers of the Truth, used to come out of St. Louis over the signature "G."

God have mercy on our poor Church!

P. H. B.

✱ Judgment Day

Prof. W. Albrecht, Springfield, Illinois

Another matter which, besides others already discussed, attracted our attention in Dr. E. Matzner's paper delivered before the Iowa District of the American Lutheran Church, bearing the title "A Sane Eschatology," was his doubt that the signs of the approach of Judgment Day revealed in Scripture have to date found any fulfillment.

Read the answer Christ gave Matth. 24, 4-33 and Mark 13, 5-37 on the question of His disciples: "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Christ here enumerates abnormal conditions or disorders in the life of the nations on earth, such as the general hostility among nations, wars, pestilence, famines, hostility toward the Christian Church; disorders in the realm of nature such as earthquakes, floods, disturbances among the stellar bodies; disorders in the Church such as false teachers, the falling away from the Gospel, the rise of the great Antichrist who behaves in the Church as though he were God and, while using Christ's name, seduces many to apostasy by his lying powers, signs, and wonders. Besides this, Christ connects the preaching of the Gospel in the whole world with the end of the world. Christ closes with the words: "So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

Of these signs enumerated by Christ, Dr. Matzner mentions: "The Gospel will be preached in all the world; there will be catastrophic events in nature such as earthquakes and floods; striking phenomena will take place among the celestial bodies; there will be wars and unrest among nations; and times of great tribulations and falling away from the faith are to be expected." Later he speaks of the Antichrist. But he does not specially mention the false Christs and false prophets, of whom Christ speaks three times and at length.

Is any one of these signs fulfilled? Dr. Matzner does not say yea or nay. Are they all fulfilled, or at least in the process of being fulfilled? No answer. Is the end of all things at hand? Here are some of Dr. Matzner's answers: "Thus earthquakes and similar natural phenomena are to the Christian always . . . a reminder of the end of all things; but the signs occurring just before the end will evidently be of a different character, already indication that the dissolution of the natural order has begun." To me that is the same as saying: There will be a Judgment Day; but don't worry, it is not near. Again: "The fact that wars are growing ever more terrible is evidence to the Christian that history is

moving toward its ultimate climax. How near or how remote that climax may be — who can tell?" Is that the attitude Christ calls for, when He tells us to be on the *qui vive*, to be wide awake, to be ready for the call? Matth. 24, 42; Luke 21, 36; 12, 40. Or was Peter expressing the mind of Christ, when he said, "The end of all things is at hand"? 1 Pet. 4, 7. Matzner says: "There will again be signs and wonders when history moves into its new and final phase." Accordingly, the world is not yet supposed to be in "its new and final phase." The second "beast," Rev. 13, 11, is nowhere around. The Antichrist with his lying powers and signs and wonders has not yet appeared over the horizon. Is Judgment Day near? Answer: "My Lord delayeth His coming." But nevertheless be ready.

And as to the preaching of the Gospel in all the world, Dr. Matzner asks: "When shall we consider that prophecy fulfilled? Is it enough that every nation as such has had the opportunity to hear the message of Christ's salvation? Or does it mean that each individual member of every nation must first have the Gospel offered to him? In the former case we might consider the condition of the prophecy fulfilled even now; in the latter case it would be hard to tell how near we are to the goal or how far we are still from it." Would Christ give us as a mark of the proximity of Judgment Day a thing we could never ascertain, namely, whether the Gospel had been preached to every individual in the world? If the Apostles could say with good reason in their day that the preaching of the Gospel had penetrated the whole world (Rom. 1, 8; 10, 18; 1 Thess. 1, 8; Acts 19, 10; 1 Tim. 3, 16), why then try to put an interpretation on the words of Christ that would indicate this sign as not fulfilled? Has not Christ purposely so designed His signs that every age since the days of the Apostles could preach them as fulfilled, in order that we might at all times be ready and still not be able to calculate the exact time of the Judgment Day? Rather than listen to a preacher who makes us lukewarm and drowsy, we follow our Father Luther, who gives it as his conviction "that the greater part of these signs have already occurred and not many others are to be expected."

If this paper of Dr. Matzner is a true picture of the spirit ruling in the ALC — and evidently it is, for a whole district has adopted it as its confession —, the time for a merger is not here. There is a different spirit, tainted with "scientific theology" and "Jewish opinions," in the ALC. The ghost of the old "Open Questions" of the former Iowa Synod is still making its rounds.

⑥ Review Of Publications

A Catechism of Differences: A Popular Study of the Doctrine and Practice of the Various Lutheran Bodies in the United States. By Harold E. C. Wicke. 68 pages, 4x6, stiff paper covers. 35c per copy; \$3.36 per doz., postage. Order from: Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The author of this timely booklet had a very practical purpose in mind. In a letter to the present writer he has stated: "Hortonville (where he is stationed) is about 15 miles west of Appleton, which has five Wisconsin Synod churches, three ALC, and one ULC. When some of my members moved to Appleton, they joined some of these other congregations, despite my protest. In order to enlighten and warn my members I wrote a series of articles for my monthly church paper, pointing out the differences." Later, at the request of brethren in the Joint Synod of Wisconsin, Pastor Wicke prepared the articles in catechetical form. In 1948 the Northern Wisconsin District of that Synod recommended it for publication and general distribution. Thus this booklet is the answer to a current problem which is unfortunately, not generally being properly solved.

The Missouri Synod has given the world an up-to-date *Brief Statement* of its doctrinal position. The way to find out what other Synods believe and teach, is to go into their books and periodicals and list their doctrinal statements as Pastor Wicke has done.

Pastor Wicke takes for granted that the members of the Synodical Conference are one in faith and doctrine. In fact he uses the formulations of doctrine in the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod for most of his presentation. The differences found in synods other than those of the Synodical Conference are presented under doctrinal and practical heads. They touch on the Inspiration and Inerrancy of the Bible; Conversion; Predestination; Justification; the Church; Sunday; the Lord's Supper; Millennium and related teachings. Practical topics include unionism and lodge membership. Of the doctrinal differences, Pastor Wicke writes: "This list does not exhaust the doctrinal differences that exist, but touches upon the most important ones."

Pastor Wicke's characterization of the various Lutheran bodies is fair and to the point. "The Synodical Conference," he writes, "is the conservative (we would have said 'orthodox') group; the United Lutheran Church is the liberal body; the American Lutheran Conference tries to assume a position between the other two, with many members of the Conference very liberal and some

conservative." Bodies outside the Synodical Conference have no real unity of doctrine. They practice false church fellowship and lack doctrinal discipline. "The United Lutheran Church," says Pastor Wicke, "officially advocates only fellowship among the various Lutheran synods," but "practices almost indiscriminate religious fellowship with practically all Protestant denominations." (P. 60f.) We feel that Pastor Wicke has unintentionally been too charitable to the American Lutheran Conference in this respect. For he indicates that the policy of this particular body in fellowship matters is that of "selective fellowship," or of a more careful selection of "religious fellowship with any pastors or parishes of any other Lutheran Synods, if they find they are personally in doctrinal agreement with those pastors or parishes." (P. 59.) This, we would say, is also only the "official" position. Actually, the American Lutheran Church and the American Lutheran Conference practice fellowship openly with the Federal and World Council of Churches people. Just to mention one instance — the *Lutheran Standard* had nothing but praise for its Dr. Bodensieck, when he was appointed as a member of the Study Department Committee of the World Council, to which the ALC belongs and to which it has contributed more money than any other denomination except the Methodists. Missourians ought to keep in mind this indiscriminate fellowship of the ALC, as we consider whether or not we are one in doctrine and in practice.

This little booklet will offer invaluable help to every Missouri Synod pastor who wishes properly to instruct his people.

One of the basic principles in this *catechism* is taboo with so-called "Lutherans" outside the Synodical Conference. The *Lutheran Companion* (Augustana Synod) takes exception to the fact that Pastor Wicke demands "complete agreement in all details of doctrine" as a prerequisite for church fellowship. In its February 8, 1950, issue, its "Spectator" shows that he does not understand true Scriptural unity of doctrine, when he writes: "If this statement is taken literally, no people can have fellowship, not even a man and his wife. It is impossible to demand as faith in papal infallibility." In fact, he says that this is the same thing, because it is "faith in the infallibility of theological professors and synodical presidents who frame doctrinal statements." (For anyone to fail or not to fail is one thing; to be infallible is another thing.) The "Spectator" obviously does not understand the proper origin or formulation of Scriptural doctrine, nor does he understand the principle of patient and persistent doctrinal discipline. People like that, who do not

want true doctrinal unity, will not approve of Pastor Wicke's booklet.

The *Lutheran Sentinel* (Norwegian Synod, Synodical Conference) says: "The Rev. Wicke has done the cause of confessional Lutheranism a good turn by supplying us with this concise and well-written brochure at a time when there is confusion worse confounded in certain sections of American Lutheranism regarding questions of our most holy faith, and when UNIONISM is no longer considered a serious sin in many quarters." (August 27, 1949, p. 254.) Every real Missourian and every Confessional Lutheran ought to read this booklet, study it, and keep it handy for reference.

WALTER R. BUIHL.

Ten Studies on the Church Through the Centuries, by Melva Rorem. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. 72 pages, 5 1/4 x 7 1/4; paper covers. Price 40 cents.

Under the auspices of the Board of Parish Education of the (Norwegian merger) "Evangelical Lutheran Church," Augsburg Publishing House has issued fifteen series of studies in various branches of Christian education. The present ten studies on the Church are a revision of C. A. Wendell's *Little Journeys in His Kingdom*, originally published by the Augustana Book Concern.

Whoever is interested in seeing what is being done toward education in the parishes of the "Evangelical Lutheran Church" has an opportunity to see that here. The monograph in question, agreeable to its title, tells the story of the Church in general through the centuries; and then, as one would expect this, it emphasizes the history of the "Evangelical Lutheran Church" and its affiliations, — the American Lutheran Conference, the National Lutheran Council, and the Lutheran World Federation.

One also has an opportunity here to some extent to judge teaching within the "Evangelical Lutheran Church." On pages 31-35 the author correctly sets forth the history and the false claims of the Roman papacy; but she fails to rise to the height of the public confession of the Lutheran Church which declares the pope to be the very Antichrist. It is also a false concession to Romanism to say (p. 35) "Jesus had said to Peter, 'Thou art Peter (a rock), and upon this rock will I build my Church . . .'" Peter means a rockman, a man of rock; the Rock (petra) on which the Church is built is Christ. On page 65f. the author speaks as though the various Lutheran synods in America were just so many national organizations: "Each nationality preferred having

its own synod, and in some cases several sprang up within the same nationality. Gradually it appeared that there were too many. They overlapped and interfered with one another." Every one who is at all acquainted with the history of Lutheran churches in America knows that to this day the various Lutheran confessional groups have been separated by serious differences in doctrine and practice. That is demonstrated also by the public polemics of her own group down to the latest moment. Cp., e. g., "Missouri's Old Heresy" (verbal inspiration) in *Confessional Lutheran*, August, 1949, p. 98. And, of course, it is not true either what is said of the Norwegian Synod: "In 1917 three Norwegian synods united to form the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America . . . the Hauge Synod, the United Norwegian Lutheran Church, and the Norwegian Synod. . . . In 1946 this name was changed to 'The Evangelical Lutheran Church'." The simple truth of the matter is that, so far as the Norwegian Synod is concerned, certain elements within it caused a division contrary to the doctrine which we have learned (Rom. 16, 17) and sold out their own interest in the Synod by a doctrinal compromise with the other two groups named, while a minority has faithfully perpetuated the Norwegian Synod to this day, continuing the confession of its historic doctrine and practice within the Synodical Conference. Whoever wants to enjoy the reputation of being a faithful historian must let facts remain facts, however much or little they may be to his own particular liking.

P. H. B.

Pastoral Care of the Sick. By Johan Christian Heuch. Translated from the original Norwegian by J. Melvin Moe. 146 pages, 5x8. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. \$1.50.

J. C. Heuch (for information concerning whom we are indebted to Prof. N. A. Madson) was a bulwark of conservative Lutheranism in the latter seventies and early eighties of the last century. At this time the blasphemous Bruno Baurian theology of Tuebingen was beginning to raise its voice at the University of Christiania. Heuch delivered a series of lectures at the university which were later published under the title *The Essence of Unbelief*. The book is one of the most thoroughgoing exposures of what is now known as Modernism. Heuch became bishop of Kristiansand Stift on the west coast of Norway, where people flocked to him by the thousands to hear the true Gospel. In the nineties he delivered a series of sermons under the title "The Testimony Concerning Christ." In his preaching

and writing he laid bare the innermost workings of the human heart in all its wickedness, but also applied the balm of Gilead to souls smitten by the Law of God. This is psychology at its best, a real study of the soul-life of man. It was at this period of his life that Heuch wrote the book before us for review. In later life he lapsed in his firm doctrinal stand. A book issued at this time, *Against the Stream*, shows that Heuch accepted some of the theories of the Tuebingen school. He, e. g., rejected, as being inspired, the imprecatory psalms. But in the book under review no concessions are made to Modernism.

The six chapters of this book have the following headings: Introduction, Preparatory Work, The Unconverted, Sickbed Conversions, The Weak Faith, The Strong Faith. Heuch gives much valuable information on how to deal with the sick in general as well as in specific cases. He tells the pastor that he needs to be a good diagnostician of the spiritual ills of the sick and that he must apply the Word according to them. In order to give our readers a better insight into the book, we shall give a few subheadings of Chapter Two (Preparatory Work), — "Speak Privately with the Sick." "Diagnose the Patient's Spiritual Condition." "Each Case Different." "An Actual Experience." "The Importance of Diagnosis." "Difficulties of Diagnosis." "Gaining the Patient's Confidence." "The Pastor's Attitude." "Diagnostic Questions." "Questions Should be Concrete." "Acknowledging Specific Sins." "Simplicity." "Use Few Questions." "Spiritual Conditions Vary." Every experienced pastor will know that the advice here given is good.

We regret to notice one serious flaw in the author's theology, concerning Conversion. In conversion, man is, as our Confessions say, purely passive. Conversion is wholly the work of the Holy Ghost and the work of a moment. The moment of conversion is not brought about by a man's *permitting* himself to be converted. On the contrary, when God, who through the Gospel has a way of changing a man's will, has made willing ones out of unwilling ones (to use the language of Confessional Lutheranism again), conversion has taken place; and, we repeat it, divine grace does not depend on men's permitting their conversion. Contrary to such Scriptural teaching, we read in the book before us: "God's preparatory grace had been mightily at work in their hearts, but they had not yet permitted the Holy Spirit to perform His regenerative work in them." (P. 98.)

With the restriction noted, we commend this book to those whose work requires them to deal

with the physically and spiritually ill. It can be a real help to the clergy.

A. OESCH, Wausa, Nebr.

How Do You Do? By Edward Kuhlmann. 188 pages, 5½x7¾. The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio. \$2.00.

This is the most recent of ten little books by Dr. Kuhlmann, written more or less according to a general pattern — brief, informal essays, containing bits of philosophy in a lighter vein from a Christian point of view. Each of the essays is woven about some illustrative incident, sentiment, or anecdote which may prove suitable for various occasions.

The book is not free from the author's indifference to doctrine and unionism which is so prominent a characteristic of his *Proudly We Hail*. Certainly, it is not "a sad commentary upon *our faith* that some of the bitterest prejudices continue to run rampant in the church of Him who proclaimed peace on earth, good will to men" unless the author means by "our faith" (in which he includes his own belief) the false faith of some people among professed Christians. Whole-hearted acceptance of our faith, in the proper sense of the word, is just the thing that will remove false prejudices. The unionistic sentiment of Oxenham with which the author brings this essay to a climax and its close must be rejected. It is by their *confession* that we are according to Scripture to decide whether we shall or shall not "join hands," that is, practice fellowship with others; and that means also other Christians. The problem of the Jew is by no means as simple as the author would make one believe. Far from prejudices being wholly on the other side of the question, Jewish prejudices have during twenty centuries invited opposition wherever people of this creed and race have lived. And as for the statement that the Jew's "record of achievement is one of which he may justly be proud," can that possibly be true in the light of the fact that this record of achievement includes, e. g., the delivering of Christ into the hands of the Gentiles to be crucified? Or is this not supposed to be counted in the record? An orthodox Jew still regards the rejection of Jesus as all-important. By similar specious argumentation the author fans the flames of the racial question also with reference to the color-line. (Pp. 118, 119.)

Again leaning on Oxenham on p. 116, the author is in error with respect to the right answer to the question as to whether man can of his own choice decide the immortal destiny of his soul — unless, indeed, immortal destiny of the soul can

possibly mean no more to him than the earthly renown which "Johnny Applesed" achieved in his day, which we hardly would want to believe. On the other hand, the doctrine of man's creation in the likeness of God, and of the loss and restoration of that likeness is not clearly presented — we would say, hardly presented correctly — on p. 44. A sentiment expressed on p. 137 (last lines of second-last paragraph), resting wholly on specious argumentation, approaches something akin to blasphemy.

We can recommend this publication only to discerning people, particularly pastors, who will use it with the discrimination rightly expected of an intelligent Christian.

P. H. B.

Martin Luther: A Narrative Poem. Theo. Huggenvik. 16 pages, 5½x8½; paper cover. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Price: 15 cents.

This is an attempt to reduce to metrical, rhymed verse the story of Luther's life and work, — the Reformation of the Church in the sixteenth century. It will, no doubt, be read with profit by the laity, especially by young people.

P. H. B.

❷ Neglecting Justification in Our Preaching

There seems to be some within our circles who imagine that there is something dangerous about preaching full and free forgiveness in Christ Jesus. They imagine that they dare not preach too much Gospel, that they must play-down the glorious promises of God, or preach the Gospel but sparingly, lest their hearers become negligent in Christian life. In other words, these men would tell us that we must emphasize and preach more sanctification and *less justification*.

But thereby we would neglect the one thing that gives all our preaching its value. Well did Dr. Sommer write some years ago: "While proclaiming the many truths which the Word of God teaches, we must not forget the one all-important truth without which all the rest lose their value — justification by faith alone. If we preach all the others and forget this one, we are simply writing zeros and neglecting to put down the one digit which gives to each zero its respective value." (*Lutheran Witness*, 1919, p. 10.)

Let us see that we keep first things first — also in our preaching. The doctrine of Justification is the justification of all true Christian preaching, I Cor. 15:14, 17.

D.

● The Most Evident Sign of Corruption

Under the heading, "When Is a Church Corrupt?," *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. XXIII, edited by the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, under the direction of Dr. F. Pieper, quoted a paragraph from A. Brauer's "Concerning the Certainty of Salvation," pp. 4, 5 (p. 215) as follows:

"There is no more evident sign of the corruption of a church than when openly proclaimed false doctrine is tolerated for the sake of peace, as is now so frequently the case; or when union, involving what is false and what is true, is even formally entered into, in a so-called spirit of love and meekness. Let churches then stand there in an exemplary outward condition, and let them overflow with so-called works of love — divisive conflict for pure doctrine is as much a sign of the true life and the good health of the Church as the expulsive conflict against the Old Adam and his never ceasing sin is such in the case of an individual Christian. To declare peace here for the sake of tranquility means *defection* from its divine destiny."

Contributed by Rev. F. E. P.

● What Our Readers Say

"Sometime ago someone sent me a copy of the *Confessional Lutheran*. I personally feel that every pastor of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod should not only subscribe to it, but read it. . . . If the so-called "44" desire to be one with the ALC and the ULC., the sooner they join them the better it will be for the rest of us. I who at one time was affiliated with the ALC want none of this union. That would only mean that I would again be forced to be associated with a group who only possess a make-believe Lutheranism and such as are in the habit of speaking quite disrespectfully of Luther. . . . When will some of our leaders quit fooling themselves and stop being fooled? . . . I fear that some of our leaders have been imbibing a little too much of fraternization with some of the 'brethren' of the opposite camps." — Pastor, Missouri Synod; formerly of the ALC.

"There are few publications on my list to which I send my subscription fee more gladly and willingly than to the *Confessional Lutheran*. It has done an excellent piece of work in keeping our people awake to the insidious dangers threatening the very existence of a truly confessional Lutheran Church. There is no more wicked force to contend with here below (aside from

the father of it) than entrenched ecclesiasticism, enjoying a confidence which it has inherited from faithful forebears, but which it no longer deserves; having at its disposal the powerful machinery of an organization whose fundamental principles it long ago has left on the scrap heap, but to which it still pays a rather questionable lip service when it thinks this will serve its wicked purpose. May God (the God of the shepherd boy David) continue to bless the efforts of all who are furthering the cause of this clarion *Confessional Lutheran*, whose convictions no one can rightfully call in question." — Professor.

"How else will we know what is going on in the Church at large, if not for the consecrated men with the *Confessional Lutheran*? God knows that too many seek the easy way out and fall in with all that is liberal and 'big' even though opposing what God has long ago prescribed for His children and Church. May the Lord grant you His grace and love to hold fast what we have, that others may not take the crown He has given us in our Church!" — Pastor, Slovak Ev. Luth. Church.

"A splendid paper. May God continue to bless it." — Professor, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

"For information on soundness-in-doctrine-matters in this day and age the *Confessional Lutheran* is a 'must'." — Pastor, Iowa.

"May the Lord further your efforts toward helping overcome doctrinal and disciplinary laxness in our synod." — Seminary student.

"May the Lord of the Church abundantly bless your work toward the speedy re-establishment of unity in the Lutheran Church — Synodical Conference." — Pastor, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

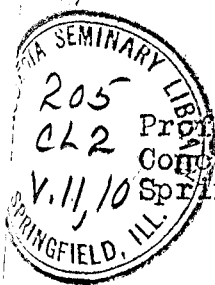
"You are fighting a good fight; but since you have not finished your course, keep up the fight — you are not standing alone." — Pastor, Illinois.

The COMMON CONFESSION Must Be Repudiated

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD



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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

OCTOBER, 1950

NUMBER 10

IN THIS ISSUE: The Milwaukee Convention of the Missouri Synod — The "Common Confession" and Free Conferences — A Plea for Circumspection and Sobriety — Agreement Between the ALC and the Missouri Synod? — "Character Assassination" — What Our Readers Say.

● The Milwaukee Convention of the Missouri Synod

"It is an open and known fact that church councils have often erred and contradicted each other." — Luther.

Spiritual Psychosis

We are living in a day of unionism such as the world has hardly witnessed before. Perhaps we should simply say, we are living in the day of unionism. Unionism is an epidemic disease. It is a sort of mass psychosis. Where such a spirit exists there is no longer a proper sense of perception for whatever anyone may have to say against it. If anyone speaks against it, he is speaking on a wave-length for which the corre-

sponding receiving apparatus no longer functions. All testimony is in vain. Logical argumentation is futile. Self-contradiction no longer matters. Positions vehemently rejected by unionists themselves a decade or two ago are suddenly embraced and fanatically defended. In such straits one is driven for refuge to the Savior's assurance that among the evil spirits which afflict men there is a kind that cannot be driven out except by prayer. Unionism is such a spirit. And this spirit, this mass psychosis which is plaguing churches in an unprecedented measure today, and which has been diligently nurtured in recent years in the Missouri Synod through such publications as the *Lutheran Witness* and the *American Lutheran*, was quite evident at the Milwaukee Convention of the Missouri Synod. That convention should drive every

souri Compromise" by Editor Ruff in the *ULC Lutheran*. It is a simple fact that this document fails to confess just such truths as it is imperative to confess if there is to be a demonstration of doctrinal agreement between the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. These truths concern such doctrines as those of the Verbal Inspiration of Holy Scripture, Justification, the Natural Depravity of Man, Election and Conversion, the Means of Grace, the Church, and the Last Things. For a discussion of matters at issue we refer to another article in this issue of our journal.

There is a ray of hope in these resolutions. For they provide that "further study or future developments may show the need of clarification or expansion of the Common Confession." (An important correction of the *Convention Digest*, issued over the signature of Dr. L. Meyer, Director of Publicity and Missionary Education, "to help delegates in reporting to their congregations" is in order, where this section of the resolutions mistakenly reads, p. 18: "further study of future developments.") Further study will indeed show the inadequacy of the *Common Confession* to anyone who will earnestly and prayerfully undertake such study in this critical hour.

A Condemnation That Does Not Condemn

The Missouri Synod has through these years rightly refused to join the National Lutheran Council, because it is a unionistic body. In 1944 Missouri still publicly confessed that this "would apparently involve our Synod in unionistic principles and endeavors beyond a mere co-operation in externals and thus violate Scriptural principles which we are bound to observe." (*Proceedings*, p. 252.) In 1947 a resolution was adopted admitting that "there is a difference of opinion among us on the issue of joining or not joining the National Lutheran Council at the present time," and providing "that a committee (two pastors, two laymen, one teacher) be appointed by the Presidium and the Board of Directors to continue the study of the question of our relationship as a participating body in the NLC and report its findings to the next convention, after having submitted its findings to all pastors and congregations of our Church six months prior to the convention." (*Proceedings*, p. 536f.) At its recent convention in Milwaukee, the Synod again declined membership as a participating body in the NLC, because, among other things, "much of the program of the Council is of a unionistic nature, as is plainly shown in the majority report of the Committee."

According to parliamentary procedure this resolution ought simply to read: "... the report

of the Committee." (See Robert's *Rules of Order*, p. 216.) If a dissenting minority of a committee wishes to present its views and any one objects to this, it requires a vote to receive the presentation of such views. However, already before the convention the dissenting views of Mr. Dickmeyer concerning the National Lutheran Council, labeled "Minority Report," (it would be more proper to refer to them simply as the "Views of the Minority") were treated as though they were of equal standing with the Committee Report and were, alongside of that, given the widest publicity, especially also through the *Lutheran Witness*. If the Missouri Synod is, contrary to Scriptural principle, parliamentary procedure, and its own past policy, merely going to condemn things as wrong through committees and convention resolutions, and yet permit its members, inclusive of members of such committees, as well as its own official publications and others, publicly to agitate and propagandize contrary views, it just can't expect to be taken too seriously any longer in its declared condemnation of such things. Dissenters should be evangelically dealt with. To accord them equal right in propagandizing their error constitutes a unionistic practice which can be expected to end only in a false liberalism's completely "taking over" the affairs of the body in question.

Have Missouri's Troubles Gone Over Her Head?

In the closing session of the Milwaukee Convention the Committee on Doctrinal and Inter-synodical Matters (No. 3) still had not reported on the following seventeen important memorials which had been submitted to Synod: Nos. 608-612; 634-640; 643-647 (*Reports and Memorials*, pp. 452-466; 499-509; 511-519). The headings of these memorials, as listed in the official synodical book of *Reports and Memorials*, show the serious nature of matters on which they asked Synod to act. Here they are: "Where does Synod Now Stand?" (Various doctrinal and practical matters, signed by two congregations, a board of elders, a laymember, a teacher, and 18 clergymen, who feel that they "have the right to request and to expect a straight and unequivocal answer to every one of these questions, since these are matters which do not require long and painstaking research, but are taught in the textbooks which have been recognized among us for many years.") "Correct Synodical Essay." (Various doctrinal complaints against the 1949 essay read by Dr. W. Arndt to the Southern California and the California and Nevada Districts; asks for correction of doctrinal errors and advises Synod that "in a contrary case Synod must be viewed as

a body which has forfeited its orthodox character according to its own confession, *Brief Statement*, Sect. 29; cp. *Lehre und Wehre*, 36, p. 262; signed by six pastors.) "Regarding the President's Theses on the Church." (Petitions Synod "to order a correction of all unsatisfactory and unclear doctrinal statements contained in the President's theses on the Church"; signed by seven pastors.) "Memorial Concerning Synodical Discipline," submitted by a pastor. "Remove Leaven of False Doctrine and Practice." (Pleads in deep earnestness that the Hon. Synod institute effective measures AT THIS CONVENTION to remove without delay this dangerous leaven of false doctrine and practice from our body"; submitted by a congregation.) "Investigation of St. Louis Faculty." (Asks action on a petition previously addressed by 127 pastors to the Board of Electors of the St. Louis Seminary and summarily dismissed on alleged procedural grounds by the chairman of that Board who was at the same time chairman of the St. Louis Board of Control; submitted by a past professor of the St. Louis Seminary, a professor of one of our Normal Schools, and 26 pastors.) "Special Committee to Investigate St. Louis Faculty." (Contains various charges; submitted by a congregation.) "Demanding an Investigation of the Faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis." (Various charges. "Not adjudicating these matters is giving grievous offense"; "there is grave danger that the Missouri Synod is forfeiting its orthodox character"; "frustrating the very purpose for which the Synod was organized"; submitted by four congregations.) "Public Correction of Public Error." (Charges that "of late years there has been much confusion with regard to this simple principle"; petitions Synod to uphold it; submitted by seven pastors.) "Public Correction of Public Error." (A similar petition, submitted by two congregations and three additional pastors.) "Purge Lutheran Witness of Error," submitted by a congregation. "Concerning Statements in *Lutheran Witness*." (Charges various errors; submitted by a congregation and three pastors.) "Joint Prayer or Prayer Fellowship?" (Charges "a number of un-Scriptural statements and misrepresentations" in the publication *Prayer Fellowship* by Theo. Graebner and asks remedial action; submitted by a congregation and another pastor.) "Repudiate pamphlet *Prayer Fellowship* by Theo. Graebner," submitted by a congregation. "Dr. Graebner's Aberrations and Dr. Behnken's Ineffective Action." (Various charges, submitted by four pastors and a congregation.) "Condemn and Discontinue Association of Lutheran Seminarians." (Pleads with Synod "to save our future ministry from the damage inflicted on their faith and char-

acter by membership in the Association of Lutheran Seminarians; to that end to exclude the ALS from our institutions"; submitted by a congregation and an additional pastor; a similar memorial, unnumbered, was submitted by three congregations and three pastors.) "Evangelical Procedure in Dealing with Erring Churches," submitted by the Chicago English District Pastoral Conference.

Concerning these numerous important memorials the Committee on Doctrinal and Intersynodical Matters in the closing session of the Milwaukee Convention finally reported that they contain matters "requiring extensive investigation," and that the committee "for lack of time could not effectively act on these matters at this convention." Hereupon Synod in its dying moments at its Milwaukee Convention resolved "to refer these charges to its regularly set up channels for action."

To all of this we can only say that when complaints of such a serious nature, most of them of long standing, have become so numerous in a church that it can no longer give proper attention to them at its regular convention, then such a church must indeed be said to be in a very bad way. The question is certainly in order: Have Missouri's troubles gone over her head?

What Happened to This Important Memorial?

Under date of April 26, 1950, the following important memorial was submitted to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for action at its Milwaukee Convention:

"TO THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—
MISSOURI SYNOD in convention
assembled at Milwaukee, Wisconsin,
June 21-30, 1950:

"Whereas, the following Letter, under date of June 18, 1949, addressed to President J. W. Behnken by members of the editorial staff of the *Confessional Lutheran* and of the board of the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau, contains serious charges against the chief executive officer of our Synod, and the specific charge that a virus of false doctrine has infected the Theses on 'The Doctrine of the Church Submitted for Discussion' under the auspices of our President; and

"Whereas, this Letter and the charges it contains have, up to the present writing in the month of April, 1950, remained unanswered for a period of ten months; and

"Whereas, such failure to respond to the charges of inaction and appeals for action based on well documented evidence of aberrations within our fellowship, as well as the failure to supply needed correction in theses issued under the President's own auspices, is much more serious

than a mere failure to answer important correspondence, being in effect an official protection of false teachings and of those who are promoting them; now, therefore:

"We, the undersigned clerical members of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, hereby appeal to our Synod in convention assembled, entreating that it require President J. W. Behnken to answer the charges hereinafter directed against his administration of office, and appoint a committee satisfactory to both parties to adjudicate the matters at issue between us and our President during the period for which this convention remains in session."

The Letter referred to in the memorial was subjoined to it as a part of it. It may be read in the January, 1950, issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*.

This memorial was signed by the following ten pastors, all them members of the staff of the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau: J. Buenger, Paul H. Burgdorf, A. C. Dahms, Theo. Dierks, S. T. D., A. T. Kretzmann, A. V. Kuster, E. T. Lams, D. D., W. H. McLaughlin, M. S. T., Eldor Mueller, and E. Wiedbusch.

We were present throughout the convention (at considerable inconvenience and expense to ourselves), and at no time did we hear any report given concerning this important memorial, which deals with matters of long years' standing, of the most serious nature. Whatever action may have been taken or not taken regarding it, we were offered no opportunity to exercise our right and privilege of speaking concerning it to the convention to which it was addressed.

Lifting Up Our Eyes Unto the Hills

In view of all that has been said, must the reader not agree that the Milwaukee Convention of the Missouri Synod will have to go down in history as a *tragic convention*?

It is with bleeding hearts, and with fervent, earnest prayer, the kind of prayer that availeth much (Jas. 5, 16) that we look to the Lord of the Church, not only to strengthen us for the tremendous task of bearing witness that still lies before us, but to rouse ever so many of our brethren to the dreadful reality of things confronting them, and that he grant the synod which we so love that she may yet return to the old paths and to her first love, so that we may still as brethren dwell together in unity and find rest for our souls.

P. H. B.

❷ The COMMON CONFESSION and Free Conferences

In all doctrinal controversies there is not only a *difference* of opinion, but also a certain sphere of *agreement*, embracing principles or statements which none of the contesting parties questions, but which every one admits. For a while all are going in the same direction. But then comes a parting of the ways. One party goes one way, the other goes in a different direction. But each party may think that it is going in the right direction and that the other party is departing from the right path.

The proper way to settle such a dissension is by first of all determining the common ground on which the two parties still stand, that is, the truths on which there is no quarrel, and then fixing the exact point or points of dissension and throwing the light of Scripture on this difference. Hence a true confession which is to settle a doctrinal controversy must not merely set forth truths on which all are agreed, but must also in clear words give the true Scriptural answer to all questions which have been in dispute.

In spite of assertions to the contrary, it is a fact that the *Common Confession* which was composed by representatives of the American Lutheran Church and those of the Missouri Synod does not settle doctrinal differences which still exist between these two church bodies. It contains only points of doctrine on which the two church bodies *agree*, but ignores the differences.

It is furthermore a fact that for many years, even for decades, the doctrinal differences between the American Lutheran Church and the Synodical Conference have no longer been discussed in our official publications. Owing to this neglect many laymen and even pastors no longer know these differences. How, then, can they be able to discuss intelligently those differences if they should meet members of the A. L. C. at free conferences? If intersynodical conferences of pastors and laymen should be conducted in the future, as may be expected, the chances are that in such a case discussions will turn merely about those points of doctrine on which all are agreed, especially if these discussions are conducted on the basis of the *Common Confession*, which contains only truths about which there is no quarrel. The result would be a false appearance of doctrinal unity where no real unity actually exists.

Some of those among us who love the truth and who are in favor of union *only on the basis of the whole truth* are evidently in need of some guide regarding the doctrinal differences which remain to be discussed and, if possible, to be

removed. The present lines are meant to offer such instruction and to enable faithful Lutherans to conduct discussions with members of the American Lutheran Church intelligently so that that truth which God has delivered to us may not be surrendered, but freely confessed. We shall in this presentation follow the order of the *Common Confession*, although there are weighty objections to the place which this document assigns to the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures.

I. God

In this article there is nothing which not all Lutherans believe and confess. Since the purpose of free conferences is to settle doctrinal differences it would be a waste of time and effort to dwell at length on those doctrines which were never in dispute.

II. Man

What is here stated on the Creation, on the Fall of Man, and on the State of Fallen Man is accepted by both sides. But there is an important point left out on which the A. L. C. and the Synodical Conference disagree. In the course of the controversy on Conversion a difference regarding the state of fallen man appeared. In the first decades the dispute hinged on the question: Is natural man able to desist from or discontinue wilful resistance against the grace offered him in the Gospel? This question was of course denied by Missourians while Iowans and Ohioans asserted that natural man is able to desist from or discontinue wilful resistance with spiritual strength offered him by grace without, however, as yet being converted. When shown that this statement involved synergism (mixing human works with divine grace), our opponents developed a somewhat different theory, according to which fallen man is not at all inclined to wilful resistance. And this is since that time the vital question between us: Is fallen man by nature inclined to everything which is displeasing to God, including wilful resistance against the Gospel? Missouri says, yes; the A. L. C. says, no.

The *Common Confession* states that fallen man is by nature an enemy of God and of His holy Law, and that he also "wilfully continues to transgress the holy Law in thoughts, words, and deeds." There is no dispute about this statement. But Scripture also emphatically stresses the enmity of natural man against the *Gospel* (I Cor. 1, 18; ch. 2, 14; ch. 12, 3). This feature is entirely omitted in the *Common Confession*. As soon as this matter would be broached and the question raised: How about wilful resistance of natural man against the Gospel?, the dissension would gape as wide and deep as ever. A. L. C.

men who might otherwise be willing to admit the truth that fallen man is by nature inclined to wilful resistance against the Gospel would see themselves faced by the old question: How, then, is this inclination overcome in those who are converted? Is it overcome by the Holy Ghost through the Gospel or by man himself? By omitting the attitude of fallen man over against the *Gospel* the false appearance is created as though there were no difference at this point.

Dr. W. Arndt tries to convince his readers in the *Lutheran Witness*, July 25, '50, that the *Common Confession* constitutes a *real agreement* on all points of doctrine that have been in controversy between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod. *We challenge Dr. Arndt to tell us whether or not the A. L. C. now confesses with us the Scriptural truth that fallen man is by nature inclined to wilful resistance against the Gospel? Why was wilful resistance against the LAW of God expressly mentioned, but wilful resistance against the GOSPEL omitted, in the COMMON CONFSSION?*

Wherever art. II of the COMMON CONFSSION is discussed at free conferences, Lutherans who are conscientiously concerned about the truth should ask the question: How about the attitude of fallen man over against the GOSPEL? We are all agreed that he resists the LAW of God wilfully. Is he also inclined to resist the Holy Ghost wilfully when He approaches him with the GOSPEL?

III. Redemption

On the truths stated in this article not only all Lutherans, but also all true Christians, will heartily agree. There has never been a controversy in the Lutheran Church on these truths. Since the purpose of intersynodical free conferences is to arrive at an agreement on such truths as have been in dispute, articles like this may be accepted without a debate.

IV. Election

The statement of the *Common Confession* on Election is not, as one might think, a brief presentation of this doctrine, but it contains three assertions which the teaching of the A. L. C. and that of the Synodical Conference on Election have in common. This does not imply that the two parties accept these assertions exactly in the same sense. For they do not. It simply means that either side will accept these statements as they read. Nevertheless the fact remains that the A. L. C. has an essentially different conception of Election or Predestination from that of the Synodical Conference.

The Synodical Conference teaches that God has from eternity loved the whole world of sinners and that He earnestly desires the salvation of all men. (God's Universal Will of Grace.) But at the same time it teaches according to Scripture that there is an eternal unchangeable counsel or decree of God, called predestination, which extends over a certain number of people, known to God alone, which is a cause of their faith and final salvation. Eph. 1, 3-7; II Thess. 2, 13, 14; Acts 13, 48; Rom. 8, 28-30; II Tim. 1, 9; Matt. 24, 22-24.

Thus, on the one hand, we believe what Scripture says of the gracious will of God which extends over all sinners on the basis of John 3, 16 and many other texts which teach the same truth. Likewise, we take the doctrine of Election or Predestination simply out of those texts, just adduced, which deal with predestination. We believe and confess both truths as they are revealed to us in Scripture. But we do not try to harmonize these truths with each other and to explain what remains dark to us in this connection. We do not try this, because we know that, as our Lutheran Confessions remind us, there are things which God has not yet revealed to us regarding the eternal decree of election and which we therefore should not try to pry into.

As to the *proper way of using this doctrine*, the Synodical Conference follows the instruction of Luther and the Formula of Concord that we should not speculate about God's secret counsel, but accept what God has *revealed* regarding it in the Scriptures, and follow God's order of salvation. Doing this, and comprehending all that the Word of God reveals to us in this connection, a Christian will arrive at the comforting assurance that God Who has in Christ loved and redeemed the whole world of sinners has through the Gospel converted, sanctified, and kept us in the true faith, and will, according to His eternal unchangeable counsel, also lead us to eternal glory in heaven.

The American Lutheran Church, strictly speaking, does not teach a real election of those who are saved. It positively denies the eternal election of a certain number of men. It cannot accept such a conception, because it has an essentially different definition of election. The A. L. C. holds that God's eternal will or counsel of love which extends over all men, as far as it is realized, is called election or predestination. (In this definition election is different from the universal counsel of love only insofar as the realization of a certain plan is not the plan itself.) But this definition of election is a human notion which has no basis in Scripture. This notion is

still further deteriorated by the false doctrine that God's will of grace is realized in those only who resist "naturally," but not in those who resist "wilfully." Scripture nowhere teaches two different kinds of resistance against divine grace.

As to the proper way of using this doctrine, the A. L. C. does not follow Luther's instruction and that of the Formula of Concord, but has developed a method of its own. It is this. They say, there are two ways of viewing what they call "election." A Christian may look at the realization of God's eternal counsel of love from two standpoints, from the standpoint of eternity or from the standpoint of time. The latter is said to be preferable, although both are considered to be Scriptural. A Christian who from his present state of grace looks backward will see that he owes his faith and all that belongs to his salvation to the realization of an eternal universal counsel of grace. On the other hand, looking at the realization of God's counsel of love from the standpoint of eternity, he will arrive at the doctrine of election "in view of faith." This mode of teaching predestination in view of faith was used by Iowa-Ohio forty to sixty years ago. But it was gradually abandoned in favor of the new "standpoint" theory.

It is true that this change in the position of the former Iowa and Ohio Synods aroused little attention within the Missouri Synod, since, just at the time, when it began to be introduced, official efforts at settling the differences began and all public polemics stopped. In the course of doctrinal discussions which followed during four decades Missourians were satisfied with the withdrawal of our opponents' older terminology and paid little attention to their present mode of teaching the old errors. The result of this neglect was the numerous unsatisfactory union documents which we have lived to see.

Will Dr. Arndt please tell us where the "Common Confession" pays attention to the changed situation and whether the A. L. C. has given up the new "standpoint" theory which is still found in the A. L. C. Declaration of 1938? This new mode of teaching is practically a denial of the Scripture doctrine of predestination.

At free intersynodical conferences Missourians may easily decide the question whether or not there is still a difference left in the doctrine of election by frankly confessing "that God, before the foundation of the world, from pure grace, because of the redemption of Christ, has chosen for His own a definite number of persons out of the corrupt mass and has determined to bring them through Word and Sacrament to faith and salvation." (Brief Statement, Sect. 39.) This

is Scriptural, but it is incompatible with the older as well as with the newer A. L. C. conception of election. This statement will not be accepted by members of the A. L. C. who know the doctrine of their synod.

V. Means of Grace

In this article representatives of the Missouri Synod gave way to the opponents on two counts. In the first place, the Law of God is here treated among the means of grace, as was usually done by the former Iowa Synod and as is now done in the American Lutheran Church. The Ohio Synod, when it united with Iowa, had to submit to Iowan terminology, as in other doctrines, so also at this point. But this is the first time that Missourians, before establishment of fraternal relations, of their own free will, treat of the Law of God under the heading "Means of Grace." According to Lutheran doctrine, the preaching of the Law is necessary in order to teach men the proper knowledge of sin, but the Law has no power to create and strengthen spiritual life in the heart. The Gospel alone has this power. Therefore, properly speaking, not the Law, but only the Gospel and the two Sacraments which belong to the Gospel are the means of grace.

But much more serious is the fact that the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures is not treated as a separate doctrine at the beginning of the confession, but only as a subdivision of the article on the means of grace. This is in itself an unfortunate compliance with principles of modern theology which Missourians learned at Bad Boll, Germany, where they have fraternized with German modern theologians. At the convention in Milwaukee last June the sponsors of this "confession" succeeded in persuading the great majority of voters to accept this document officially. It was not a unanimous vote, as is required in matters of doctrine and conscience. Those who clearly see the shortcomings of this document protested, and those among them who had the right to vote, voted against it. Through this majority vote the Missouri Synod has maneuvered such members as reject the unionistic traits of the *Common Confession* into a predicament. When sitting in conference with A. L. C. members they cannot with a clear conscience approve a majority confession of their own synod.

On the other hand this new arrangement puts modernists among A. L. C. members at a great advantage in doctrinal discussions on the basis of the *Common Confession*. By considering the Scriptures merely as a means of grace the Bible is, as far as its contents are concerned, from the very start cut into two parts, such passages as

stand in some more or less direct relation to Christ and His saving work, and such as have no direct bearing on the Gospel and on Christian faith and life. Liberals always prefer to treat the article of the Holy Scriptures under the heading "means of grace" because this arrangement enables them to refer such expressions as "Holy Scriptures," "the Word of God," etc., to such parts of the Bible as deal with Christ, with Christian faith and life, and to exclude all other matter as subject to human fallacy. In modern theology this is called the "Christocentric attitude to the Scriptures." In plain language it means that not the whole Bible is accepted as the inspired and errorless Word of God, but only those parts which deal with Christ and His work of redemption. In this sense liberals can accept everything that is said in the *Common Confession*, in Art. V. of the Bible and still retain their modernistic views. On the other hand, those who really accept the whole Scripture as the Word of God, *using the same words*, confess their faith that the whole Bible is the inspired and errorless Word of God.

There is ample evidence in various church publications which shows that the A. L. C. does not with us confess the plenary inspiration of the whole Bible. But at present it is not our intention to prove that our opponents still cling to their old errors. The purpose of this article rather is to make pastors and laymen of our synod who are not acquainted with the doctrinal differences see the differences which are to be settled and to enable them to find out for themselves whether these differences have been settled in the *Common Confession* or not. To be sure, modernists who are not especially interested in union will reject the statement of the *Common Confession* on inspiration *because it sounds like a confession of verbal inspiration*. But such as are bent on union will accept it *because they can interpret it in their own sense*. That is the situation.

Dr. Arndt is misleading his readers when he assures them that in the "Common Confession" the difference between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod regarding the Holy Scriptures is settled. Does he really not know that the plenary inspiration and the inerrancy of the Bible are not officially confessed by the A. L. C. on account of numerous modernists in its midst? And does he not see that the wording in Art. V is ambiguous, so that it CAN be understood by modernists in their sense and by true Lutherans in theirs?

The only sure way at free conferences to avoid a false appearance of unity where there is no unity would be to raise the question: Are we all really agreed on the confession that the WHOLE

BIBLE is the inspired and errorless Word of God? Insistance on a clear, unambiguous answer to this question would end all duplicity in this matter.

VI. Justification

The *Brief Statement* connects objective and subjective justification in the following words: "Scripture teaches that God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ, Rom. 5, 19; II Cor. 5, 18-21; Rom. 4, 25; that therefore not for the sake of their good works, but without the works of the Law, by grace, for Christ's sake, He *justifies*, that is, *accounts* as righteous, all those who believe in Christ, that is, believe, accept, and rely on, the fact that for Christ's sake their sins are forgiven." Of these words the A. L. C. accepts the statement that believers are justified, but not the statement that God has in Christ already declared the whole world to be righteous and that faith merely accepts forgiveness as an accomplished fact. But Scripture clearly states that God in Christ did not impute their trespasses unto the world. (II Cor. 5, 19.) Scripture also identifies the expressions "not imputing sin" and "forgiving sin." (Ps. 32, 1. 2.) The truth that God does not impute their sins to the world, but in Christ forgives them, is essential and important because on the basis of this Scripture truth we may tell every sinner that his sins are forgiven and that by rejecting this truth he throws away this *pardon* of God and his eternal salvation. As Luther once said, he who does not believe the message that his sins are forgiven will see in hell how certainly his sins were forgiven while he was on earth, while he refused to believe it.

Since the A. L. C. does not deny the fact that Christ has *procured* and *provided* forgiveness of sin for all men, the *Common Confession* makes the doctrine of objective justification more palatable to the A. L. C. by stating that Christ's redemptive work is often called "objective justification." But this statement is not true. Not the work of the Son of God is called objective justification. Scripture says of God the Father that He has in Christ reconciled the WORLD UNTO HIMSELF NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM. The question therefore, when objective justification is discussed, is this: Are we all agreed that God the Father has in Christ forgiven the sins of the world so that everyone who accepts this Gospel message HAS and POSSESSES forgiveness and eternal life?

At this point we ask Dr. Arndt: Does he mean to say that the present difference can be settled by telling an untruth? This is what the "Common Confession" does by declaring that the

redemptive work of the Son of God is often called "objective justification."

VII. Conversion

This article on Conversion in the *Common Confession* contains two statements on which agreement obtains between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod. But beyond these two statements the following difference still remains: Since the Holy Ghost alone works faith in the heart of men, who are alike spiritually dead and hostile to God, the question arises: Why are not all men converted, but only some, while others are not? This is a very old question which has never been satisfactorily answered as long as the world has stood, and it never will be fully answered in this present life. The *Formula of Concord* counts this question among those which human curiosity tries in vain to fathom because God has not revealed the answer to us. (See Conc. Trigl., p. 1083.) The Missouri Synod has always maintained that we cannot and should not even try to answer this question, because Scripture does not answer it. The *Brief Statement* says, Sect. 14: "As to the question why not all men are converted and saved, seeing that God's grace is universal and all men are equally and utterly corrupt, we confess that we cannot answer it. From Scripture we know only this: A man owes his conversion and salvation, not to any lesser guilt or better conduct on his part, but solely to the grace of God. But any man's non-conversion is due to himself alone: it is the result of his obstinate resistance against the converting operation of the Holy Ghost, Hos. 13, 9."

The A. L. C. teaches: There is a difference in the conduct of natural men over against the grace of God. All men resist the Holy Ghost. They cannot help resisting Him. It is natural to them. But God's grace is prepared for this obstacle and overcomes it. The Holy Ghost is able to overcome this natural resistance without employing irresistible force. But some men go beyond their natural depravity and resist the Holy Ghost wilfully. They are not converted. As to this so-called wilful resistance, Ohioans and Iowans decades ago never thought of denying that fallen man is by nature inclined to wilful resistance against divine grace. But they formerly taught that man is able to overcome wilful resistance by spiritual powers offered him by grace. When finally convinced that this teaching involved synergism, because in that case the Holy Ghost and man would work together toward his conversion, they developed a different mode of teaching, according to which wilful resistance is never overcome, neither by man nor by the Holy Ghost. They define wilful resistance as an unnecessary

and inexplicable conduct of man. When it is not there (and according to A. L. C. teaching it need not be there) man will be converted by the Holy Ghost alone without man's cooperation. If it is there man can not be converted. Thus the re-proof of synergism is avoided. But we have seen in the discussion of Art. II on "Man" that there is no "inexplicable" wilful resistance of man, because according to Scripture fallen man is by nature inclined to resist the Holy Ghost wilfully. To invent a psychological mystery at this point is false doctrine regarding the state of fallen man.

Many who in Milwaukee voted for acceptance of the *Common Confession* evidently knew practically nothing of these differences and acted in good faith just as did those who in 1938 in St. Louis voted for acceptance of the A. L. C. Declaration which later proved to be inadequate. But Dr. Arndt has dealt with spokesmen of the A. L. C. for many years before and after their (1930) merger. He has often heard their position expounded. It is unthinkable that he should not know these things. He doubtless knows that they teach the psychological mystery, that they teach that the Holy Ghost is unable to overcome wilful resistance without employing irresistible force. How then could he tell his readers in the *Lutheran Witness* with special reference to the doctrines of Election and Conversion that the differences which were in dispute for many years have been settled in the *Common Confession*? Where does this document so much as mention the mystery in the doctrines of Conversion and Predestination which has always been a bone of contention? Where does it deal with the two kinds of resistance which the A. L. C. teaches, and with the supposed inability of the Holy Ghost to cope with wilful resistance? These differences are completely ignored in the *Common Confession*.

At free conferences of members of the A. L. C. and of the Missouri Synod it may easily be decided whether or not we are really agreed on the doctrine of Conversion. The acid test lies in the question: Is the Holy Ghost able to overcome wilful resistance without forcing man to faith? According to our Lutheran Confession (Conc. Trigl., p. 787, 889, and 891) the Holy Ghost has a way to overcome wilful resistance in the heart of man without employing irresistible force. He does it through the almighty power of divine love which is active in the Gospel. Nor is anyone able to prove that the Holy Ghost who overcomes so-called natural resistance without forcing man to believe cannot in exactly the same manner overcome wilful resistance.

VIII. Sanctification

There is no doctrinal difference in this article.

IX. The Church

In this article a number of Scriptural truths are enumerated on which there is no quarrel. The spirit of unionism which prevails in the A. L. C. and which has recently also crept into the Missouri Synod appears in the last section of this article. In order to stand firm against the spirit of unionism we must distinguish between the true spiritual unity which the Holy Ghost through the Gospel creates in the hearts of all Christians on earth, on the one hand, and the (confessional) fellowship or fraternal relation which visible church bodies practice, or which they sometimes deny each other, on the other hand. The spiritual unity which obtains in the hearts of all true believers in the world is an article of faith. We cannot see it, but we believe it on the basis of Scripture. The external fellowship which may or may not obtain between visible church bodies is a matter of observation. Everyone can know whether or not two or more church bodies practice church fellowship. Now, unionists often confound spiritual unity with external fellowship and thereby entangle the issue. Thus the *Common Confession* in the last section of Art. IX quotes the text John 17, 21, where our Lord prays for the spiritual unity of all Christians in the world, as proof-text for efforts to establish external unity between visible church bodies. As though Christ here prayed for two things, first for spiritual unity and secondly for external fellowship of all visible church bodies. It is a misuse of the Word of God when this prayer of Christ is quoted in order to attain external fellowship. For the prayer of our Savior was heard and answered by the Father in its full extent. Had Christ's prayer also included external fellowship of all visible church bodies, His would have been a prayer which, through the fault of false teachers, had never been answered. For Christ expressly prays for ALL.

But there is here also a doctrinal difference between the A. L. C. and the Missouri Synod which is of very long standing and which has never been settled. The Missouri Synod teaches now as ever that the Church in the proper sense of the word, the whole number of believers in Christ, is and remains invisible to our eyes in this life, since God alone Who searches the hearts knows who the true believers are. The A. L. C. still teaches that the Church in the proper sense of the word, the spiritual body of Christ, has also a visible side. This not only contradicts Scripture (Acts 5, 14; ch. 26, 18; Luke 17, 20.

21; Col. 3, 3. 4), but also leads to other errors. This difference is ignored in the *Common Confession*. As long as it remains, there can be no God-pleasing union between the two church bodies. At free conferences therefore attention should be called to this difference.

XI. The Lutheran Confessions

It is a correct statement that every pastor is "rightly required" to subscribe to and uphold the doctrines taught in the Lutheran Confessions. But this is not enough. Any church body that calls itself "Lutheran" may admit this demand in the abstract even if un-Lutheran tenets are actually publicly taught in its midst without protest. The principle should be upheld that only those church bodies are to be considered as truly Lutheran in which the true doctrine as set forth in the Confessions is actually taught in churches, schools, seminaries, and in public writings. Occasional aberrations which may occur in every orthodox church body should be set right by evangelical doctrinal discipline.

XII. The Last Things

As a matter of fact the chiliastic tenets which are apparently rejected in this article are still publicly taught in the A. L. C. by word of mouth and in writing. As regards the Antichrist, millennarians will never admit that the pope, as Luther and faithful Lutherans have always held, is the great Antichrist foretold in II Thess. 2 and other passages. They admit the anti-Christian character of the papacy and concede that the pope is one of the many antichrists which are also foretold in Scripture. The somewhat vague statement of the *Common Confession* that "the distinguishing features of the Antichrist, as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures, are still clearly discernible in the Roman papacy" can be understood in the same sense of the Lutheran Confessions and the *Brief Statement* as well as in the sense of chiliasts who admit the anti-Christian character of the papacy, but are still looking for a future personal great Antichrist. This ambiguity is a typical feature of unionistic statements.

Likewise, according to the wording of that passage, the chiliastic tenets apparently rejected in the *Common Confession* may be taught by chiliasts in the A. L. C. as supposed "facts," if only they are not presented as signs of Christ's second advent.

This murky atmosphere would be cleared at free conferences by the mere question: Do we all confess with the Smalcald Articles that the pope

in Rome is the great Antichrist foretold in Scripture?

* * * *

Since, for about four decades, most pastors and laymen of our synod have been without adequate information regarding doctrinal differences between the A. L. C. and the Synodical Conference, it is not an easy task for them to meet members of the A. L. C. in free conferences. But the greatest difficulty lies in the fact that at present complete unity of doctrine and practice in our own synod is lacking. Every recent convention of the Missouri Synod reminds us painfully of the fact that there are now two factions among us, the one which has to a great extent departed from our old position and has practically accepted some principles of the A. L. C., and one which insists on our old Scriptural principles in doctrine and practice. The thought forces itself on us: Is it not unwise and even a sin to encourage conferences between poorly informed members of our synod and members of the A. L. C., to be conducted on the basis of a document in which the differences which are to be settled are ignored? Should we not first of all try to cast out the beam out of our own eye and to set our own house in order? Would it not be fairer and more pleasing to God if our laity and clergy would be frankly informed of the issues which have been raised especially through the publications of the "44," and if these issues would be discussed at synod-wide conferences in the presence of spokesmen of both sides, before we try to win others for our now somewhat disordered position?

J. B.

● A Plea for Circumspection and Sobriety

(Take It from One of the "44")

"We wish rather to bring home to our readers that the Lutheran Church in our land is definitely on the way toward new alignments and that every consecrated member of our Synod, whether he belong to the clergy or laity, owes it to his Savior and to his Church to be circumspect and sober in the midst of these developments and to implore God that He might endow the leaders of our Church with a special measure of divine wisdom so to steer the course of our Synod in the second half of this century that as Vice-President Hertwig so eloquently told the convention in terms of the words of St. Peter, 'God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ'."

Prof. P. M. Bretscher, in *Conc. Theol. Monthly*, September, 1950, p. 702f.

☉ Agreement Between the ALC and the Missouri Synod?

The *Lutheran Standard*, official organ of the American Lutheran Church, over the signature of its editor, Dr. E. W. Schramm, in its issue of July 29 takes issue with the Missouri Synod's decision to stay out of the National Lutheran Council and its deliberations concerning Romans 16, 17, 18. In doing so, this is what it has to say (emphases ours): "I grant the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod the right, on the basis of its peculiar approach to this whole subject of Lutheran unity (which seems marked more by logic than by love) to stay out of the National Lutheran Council. But I do wish they would quit *prostituting the Word of God* to bolster up their scholastic argumentation. That gives offense. It's that kind of *manhandling* which many in the Missouri Synod now recognize in the Wisconsin Synod, but *which Missouri seems unable to recognize in itself.*"

In view of such facts, what should one say of those who are trying to claim that the ALC and Missouri are agreed concerning the teachings of God's Word?

"Let no man deceive you by any means!", II Thess. 2, 3. P. H. B.

☉ "Character Assassination"

From a report on "Synod and Its Work" in the parish bulletin of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of St. Luke, Chicago, Illinois, Rev. Adalbert R. Kretzmann, pastor, we have gleaned the following:

"Unfortunately, the matters concerning Church Union did not fare too well because of the bitterness and short-sightedness in the opposition of a small minority. What they lacked in size they made up in positive viciousness. Never before in the history of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod have there been such violent character assassinations on the floor of Synod. It was so disgraceful that the President of Synod, Dr. J. W. Behnken, made public apology and pledged that such things would not be permitted again. But the damage was done and Dr. E. J. Friedrich, who was one of the four Vice Presidents of Synod, was defeated because of the evil attacks upon his reputation and character. We can only pray God to preserve us from such evil and give us in our own congregation the will to peace and true building for the kingdom of God."

In his acceptance address President Behnken said: "I want to plead . . . that we guard against saying and doing those things which irritate others of our brethren and cause strife and contention among us." Whether the above fits into the description of things against which Dr. Behnken

thus warned, the reader may judge for himself. But certainly, when opponents of false church union at Milwaukee, whose testimony, sustained by the vote of the convention, caused matters to fare not too well in the opinion of one of the "44," are described as a small minority having the character of "bitterness and short-sightedness," of "positive viciousness," no one should fail to recognize such defamation as character assassination on a wholesale scale.

Hiding guilt by accusation is a common technique in the propaganda modern liberal movements. Malik and the USSR generally furnish the best examples of this technique in the council of the United Nations today. In the liberal movement in the Church the defamatory letter accompanying the Chicago Statement of the "44" in 1945 has furnished the best example so far as the Missouri Synod is concerned. Here is another example by one of the "44" of this technique, which consists in hurling at the opposition accusation of the very thing with which one's own hands are dripping with guilt.

As for building the Church, we shall continue to lend our best efforts precisely toward that end by rejecting every false move in the Direction of church union. For, as the Lutheran Church says in her great Confession: "Where God's Word is pure, and the Sacraments are administered in conformity with the same, there certainly is the Church, and there are Christians." It is by these that the Church is built. P. H. B.

☉ What Our Readers Say

"Frankly, I read the *Confessional Lutheran* each issue from cover to cover. Your periodical is too small. It is an inspiration for me to receive encouragement from articles in the *Confessional Lutheran* to continue the fight for purity of doctrine and practice. . . . Jesus gives us the SWORD OF HIS SPIRIT. Let's fight to keep the truth!" — Pastor, Oregon.

The "COMMON CONFESSION" Must Be Repudiated

**THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST
BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF
THE MISSOURI SYNOD**

**THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF
THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44"
MUST BE REJECTED**

**EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL
WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD**



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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. I, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

NOVEMBER, 1950

NUMBER 11

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☛ Mt. 18 and the Eighth Commandment as Taught by the Lutheran Church

In the Large Catechism of Dr. Luther the Lutheran Church's confession is set forth with regard to the Eighth Commandment.

Under this head the Lutheran Church confesses with the great Reformer that we are not to bear false witness against our neighbor. Taking this commandment according to its plainest meaning, our Church first of all applies it to public courts of justice; but it then points out that it "extends very much further, if we are to apply it to spiritual jurisdiction or administration," and that finally, "what concerns us all, this commandment forbids all sins of the tongue." Summing up this portion of its confession con-

cerning the proper understanding of the Eighth Commandment, our Church says that "it is summarily forbidden to speak any evil of our neighbor, however, the civil government, preachers, father and mother excepted, on the understanding that this commandment does not allow evil to go unpunished." The latter point is further stressed by the statement that "*although no one has a right in his own person to judge and condemn anybody, yet if they to whose office it belongs fail to do it, they sin as well as he who would do so of his own accord, without such office. For here necessity requires one to speak of the evil, to prefer charges, to investigate and testify.*" (Trigl. Conc., pp. 653-659.)

Our Church next points out that "the true way in this matter would be to observe the order according to the Gospel, Mt. 18," enlarging on

Zone asked Protestants, Catholics, and Jews of America each to name someone who would serve as liaison representative between the Military Government and the German Churches, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ named Dr. Bodensieck for the post of United States Protestant Liaison Representative for the years 1946-1948, although the American Lutheran Church has not been a member of this organization. Only recently there appeared a publication in Germany, dated "Fall, 1949," under the title *A Fraternal Word (Ein Brüderliches Wort)*, which contains addresses, sermons, and reports delivered by Dr. Bodensieck as director of the United States Protestant Liaison Representation in Germany for the years mentioned. In view of Dr. Bodensieck's membership and position in the American Lutheran Church as well as of his intimate connection with the *Common Confession*, announcement of the completion of which was made about simultaneously with the appearance of this book, it should prove instructive to review his theological position and activities as evidenced by this publication, *A Fraternal Word*.

A perusal of this publication will show how very much at home Dr. Bodensieck feels among sectarians of all sorts in Churches which still call themselves Christian and Protestant, but which to him are no longer sects at all. Its "First Word" (pp. 9-11) is addressed to an Evangelical congregation, and Dr. Bodensieck says in it that he "was sent by the brethren in faith in America of this congregation in order to establish a closer connection between them and the Churches in America." Next (pp. 11-13) there is a word of greeting to the Conference of German Methodists. Then follows, on pp. 13-14, a Christmas Greeting to all Evangelical Christians in Germany from the American Churches which are united in the Federal Council of Churches of Christ. In a summary of excerpts of a report rendered on various occasions (pp. 23-31) Dr. Bodensieck makes the following confession: "What would perhaps strike an evangelical Christian from Germany about church life in America? First of all, no doubt, the multiplicity of churches, of 'denominations,' as we say in America, because the word 'sect' which is used in Germany has a not wholly good by-taste and does not fit American conditions as it is; for, certainly, one can only then speak of 'sects' when an official, State-supported church exists in a country, which is not the case in America, at least not as long as our Constitution has validity and the churches or denominations are wholly free and entirely independent of the State."

In excerpts from a letter written during the meeting of the Lutheran World Convention in

Lund (June 30 to July 6, 1947), to which Dr. Bodensieck was a delegate, this "vagabond theologian" says concerning the Communion service with which the convention was opened: "Already the first act, the first meeting of the 200 delegates from perhaps 28 or 30 Churches in all parts of the world was proof of deep and comprehensive unity: it was their going to the Lord's Supper. It was not necessary first to deliberate a long while and to enter into conflict because of it, but it was the beginning of all else, the ground on which all else that happened rested." (P. 43.)

Characterizing the "ecumenicity" for which he has come to stand as over against a supposed "separatism," Dr. B. says in this letter: "Lutherans are no separatists. We are thankful to God for the blessing which has come upon us through the Reformation, but we do not therefore imagine that we are better than other Christians or that we had to separate ourselves from them. Others need us and our testimony, especially our deep understanding of the Cross of Christ; but we must also listen to what others have learned. And through jointly listening to the Word of God and exchanging thoughts and experiences and working together and really learning to know each other, jealous and distrustful thoughts disappear, and we learn to love and honor each other instead. In this way we really cultivate ecumenicity. When the world is in flames, and hatred and destruction tread everything that is beautiful and pure into the dust with brazen steps, — dare we Christians then allow ourselves to waste our strength through vain quarrels about words and speaking evil of one another? Should not the Churches lead the way with the best example and show the peoples of the world how real peace is brought about? The will to ecumenicity was to be felt very strongly in Lund."

From an address on "The Kingdom of Christ and the Churches of the World" at a traditional "academical" gathering in Heidelberg (pp. 53-57) we quote the following: "Perhaps the one or the other will even think that it would be much nicer if there were but one single church in the world. Really? Are the most enviable conditions perhaps really to be found where but one church exists? Perhaps in certain regions of South America? Or were conditions really so marvelous in the 14th century here in Europe? No, *the desire is wrong no matter by whom expressed.*" (Our emphasis.) "... Jesus Christ has given His Churches various gifts, and all can learn from one another. To one He has given the gift of aggressive push and missionary zeal; to another, the gift of careful instruction and training of baptized children; to another, love for those who

have fallen among thieves or to the impoverished; again to another, admirable courage of confession, even to the point of martyrdom; to still another, a very special gift for the thorough study of God's Word or Christian doctrine; and to another, the power requisite to demonstrating the redemption received, in practical daily life; but every Church has received certain gifts, and still possesses them if it has not disobediently or carelessly wasted them. It is possible that an American Christian possesses a more vivid view of this fact of things than, for example, a German who knows but two or three Churches or perhaps only one. But also here among you, dear brethren, the knowledge has established itself that *the Churches of Christ are like a symphony orchestra in which the most varied instruments are represented and MUST be represented, if the full sound of the symphony should reach and inspire the human ear and heart.*" (Our emphasis.) The address under discussion contains thinly veiled references to false, millennialistic hopes (for instance, on pp. 55-56).

On p. 41 Dr. Bodensieck makes the interesting observation that in contrast to the comparative luxury in Sweden which he witnessed while in Lund for the Lutheran World Convention, "water was for the most part used instead of wine in the Lord's Supper in Christian congregations of Germany"!

In a comprehensive review of the debt under which the Churches of the World are to "the Church of Germany," in a footnote on p. 56, Dr. Bodensieck says: "German theology has also committed many an error, but then also so thoroughly that the rest of the world was cured; one could in this respect almost speak of a vicarious suffering of the German Church"!

An enthusiastic foreword was written for this little volume documenting the confessional activities of a "vagabond theologian," by Bishop Meiser, the presiding bishop of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany. The publication was made possible by a gift of paper by the American Section (the National Lutheran Council) of the Lutheran World Convention to the *Hilfswerk* of the Evangelical Church in Germany, the activities of which are by no means confined to mere externals.

The Missouri Synod has taken the first important steps to enter upon a confessional suicide pact with vagabond theologians like Dr. Bodensieck through its intersynodical committee and with the whole American Lutheran Church by its Milwaukee Convention's unscriptural, unconstitutional mere majority-vote adoption of the resolutions on the *Common Confession*, — a matter of faith, doctrine, and conscience. We here once more want to document the fact that we shall

have no part in that pact. The truth simply means too much to us. We trust that many more may come to this realization, register their rejection of the *Common Confession*, and, under God, help yet to avert the tragedy so imminently confronting us.

P. H. B.

● Those Technical Expressions

(Concerning the Doctrine of Inspiration in the "Common Confession")

On Friday, June 30, 1950, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by majority vote officially adopted a new confession of faith which is not in harmony with the Scriptures in some of the doctrines which it does treat. In a report on this action in the July 25 *Lutheran Witness* Dr. Wm. Arndt states: "Only a few votes were cast against the proposed resolutions." Those few were estimated as about forty or fifty, which was indeed few compared with the total number of voting delegates; but also undoubtedly quite few compared with the total number of pastors and congregations who oppose, or, when they have had full opportunity to study this document, will oppose its acceptance. The document was not referred to the congregations, but accepted by majority vote of the Delegate Synod "as a statement of these doctrines in harmony with Scriptures." As pointed out in advance by two of our esteemed brethren in Germany, such action leaves only the alternative of accepting or rejecting the document, not the opportunity to revise and improve it. The resolutions adopted expressly declare "that additional statements, *originating in the same manner* (my emphasis) as the present 'Common Confession,' may be submitted to future conventions of our Synod and the American Lutheran Church for adoption." Thus those who like the present writer, reject any point in the "Common Confession" now adopted as being out of harmony with Scriptures, are placed in the position of rejecting the new official doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod in order to maintain their adherence to the old official doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod confessed in the "Brief Statement." This is the case in spite of the fact that Synod's action was unconstitutional (Article VIII, C, which to me implies that confessing Scriptural doctrine there must be unanimity on the congregational level), and regardless of what action the American Lutheran Church may have taken by the time these lines reach the reader, regardless also of whether the position to which the Missouri Synod has now committed itself leads to the eventual consummation of fellowship relations with that body or not.

The seven points to which objection is made in Memorial 603, which I assisted in preparing and signed after much study and prayerful deliberation, are all of importance; and my objections have not been overcome by the debate on the floor of Synod or the resolutions adopted by Synod or by Dr. Arndt's article in the *Lutheran Witness*. The first of these seven points, however, concerning Plenary Verbal Inspiration, the same on which I twice utilized the allotted five minutes at Milwaukee, is of most fundamental significance; and it is certainly one on which my fears were not only not allayed as the debate progressed but concerning which these were greatly increased by statements made at the convention, such as the statement of the speaker who declared that while he accepts verbal inspiration he does not accept it as taught in some recent literature of our Synod.

My fear that the technical terminology employed in the first paragraph on "The Word" (in Article V. Means of Grace) means the same in this document as it uniformly means in other documents has been further increased by the presentation of the matter in Dr. Arndt's above-mentioned report on "Synod's Action on the Common Confession" in the July 25 *Lutheran Witness*, page 229. Suffice it to say, over against what Dr. Arndt states, that *there has been very manifest unwillingness on the part of the A. L. C. to accept the Missouri Synod "Brief Statement" position on the Scriptures, and open controversy has now been avoided by the Missouri Synod's acceptance of the A. L. C.—U. L. C. "Pittsburgh Agreement" position on the Scriptures.* These two positions, as I intend briefly to indicate, are mutually incompatible.

We would readily believe that even since the Pittsburgh Agreement of February 13, 1939, there are still many in the A. L. C. who adhere to the Scriptural position on Verbal Inspiration. They will certainly not be strengthened by the Missouri Synod's acceptance of the "Common Confession." There was evident in the Milwaukee Convention a very strong disinclination to hear anything about the U. L. C. in the discussion of the "Common Confession." But *when we are dealing with phraseology which was accepted by the U. L. C. at Omaha (October, 1940) upon the declaration of President Knobel that it was "not to be regarded as being contrary in any sense to the position set forth in the Baltimore Declaration of 1938"; and when this is the phraseology upon which the A. L. C. has continually insisted since that time over against the expressions of the "Brief Statement"; — then the U. L. C. simply must be taken into account.* That the Baltimore Declaration of 1938 does not

admit of verbal inspiration is patent to anyone who has studied this Declaration. To one who is not familiar with the document, the point may be briefly proved by some quotations from the Proceedings of that same Baltimore Convention which adopted it (October, 1938), page 468: "*A point of serious difference concerned the definition of inspiration, particularly the presentation of verbal inspiration as given in the Brief Statement of the Missouri Synod. . . . Our commission was unable to accept the statement of the Missouri Synod that the Scriptures are the infallible truth 'also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical and other secular matters.'*" We find the words quoted not in accordance with our Lutheran Confessions, nor with the Scriptures themselves."

Does the Missouri Synod really want a confession on this crucial point which is acceptable to a body that takes this position toward the Scriptural confession that we have hitherto maintained, — and this as a "Common Confession" with a body which manifestly prefers the position of the Pittsburgh Agreement to that of the Brief Statement? A majority vote of the Milwaukee Convention has declared that such is the confession the Missouri Synod wants. This is not conservative action, "a triumph of conservative Lutheranism," but divisive action, calamitously disruptive action.

What Do the Words Say?

The merits of the question, however, can by no means be settled merely on the basis of historical consideration, or who is for and who is against this document, though it is only reasonable to take into consideration the understanding of its wording by those who introduced that wording into American Lutheran circles. But the final decision must be made on the basis of what the words say.

It is technical phraseology, in which I was thoroughly schooled in the U. L. C. (though at that time the U. L. C. did not yet have a confessional statement of its false position on inspiration; — severance of my connection with the U. L. C., 1926; adoption of the Baltimore Declaration, 1938), to speak of inspiration of the writers rather than of their words, while God's Word in 2 Timothy 3, 16 says Scripture is inspired but nowhere speaks of inspired men. In accordance with this Word of God Dr. Pieper writes: "Inspiration is not only the so-called *inspiratio realis*, inspiration of subject-matter, nor only the so-called *inspiratio personalis*, inspiration of persons, but *verbal inspiration*, inspiration of words, because the Scripture, of which this being inspired is stated, consists not of things or of

persons, but of written *words*." The "Common Confession" uses this technical terminology by avoiding the statement that Scripture is inspired (though it comes close to it when it states: "We acknowledge the Holy Scriptures in their entirety as the inspired Word of God"), while it emphatically states that God caused the Holy Scriptures to be written "by men chosen and inspired by Him." This is not the Scriptural doctrine of verbal inspiration, but the doctrine of personal inspiration. Dr. Stump, a U. L. C. dogmatician, comes closer than the "Common Confession" to the teaching of verbal inspiration, and even uses the term (which is not used in the "Common Confession"): "Inspiration is in the right sense of the term verbal." Yet he does not teach the doctrine of Scripture on inspiration, as is evident in his statement: "They are inspired words because they are the words of inspired men." So the inspiration of the words, which Scripture explicitly asserts, is to Dr. Stump only a theological deduction, not a Scripture doctrine (see "Brief Statement," paragraph 1, to the contrary); but the foundation of this deduction and of Dr. Stump's entire teaching on inspiration is the inspiration of the *writers*, which is nowhere explicitly stated in Scripture. Similarly the "Common Confession" asserts the inspiration of the writers, and allows the deduction that "therefore we acknowledge the Holy Scriptures in their entirety as the inspired Word of God" (our emphasis).

It is evident from a study of 2 Timothy 3, 16 that the inspiration of the words ("Scripture") is explicitly asserted, while the inspiration of the men can only be arrived at by a deduction. Even in 2 Peter 1, 21, where "men" is the subject and the writers are said to be "moved by the Holy Ghost," the participle modifying the subject describes properly the "impulse to write," and the inspiration in the strictest sense must even here be ascribed to *that which* they spake ("spake from God," according to the best reading), while the phrase "inspired men" will be recognized as one which nowhere occurs in the New Testament, if not as one which is entirely inconsistent with Greek idiom. If the significance of the Greek compound verbal adjective is passive ("God-breathed") and not active ("God-breathing"), as it is uniformly understood by orthodox theologians and plainly explained in our Synodical Catechism, Question 10, as a communication of thoughts and words to the mind (*suggestio rerum et verborum*), and as indeed it must be understood in 2 Timothy 3, 16 if the passage is to make sense at all, — then the Greek equivalent of "inspired men" is seen to be a manifest absurdity. If nevertheless we admit, as we do, the use of the expression in English, it is only because it aptly expresses also

the impulse to write (*impulsus ad scribendum*), which is inseparable from the inspiration in the strictest sense (communication of thoughts clothed in words), and which certainly does apply to the holy writers as such. When, however, this Biblical relation is reversed by making personal inspiration the premise and verbal inspiration a mere deduction, then the Scriptural doctrine of inspiration is denied and room is made for the "human element in Scripture." If the inspiration of the men is primary and that of their message only secondary, then there is still a possibility of mutual cooperation between the inspired writers and the divine Author in the production of the message, and the inspired men may be regarded as not only receptive but as making their positive contribution, so that the result is a composite product, a "divine-human Scripture." In such a composite product the influence of human frailty and fallibility cannot be ruled out *a priori*, but only guarded against as the Holy Spirit upon occasion "by divine inspiration supplied to the Holy writers content and fitting word," and only in this sense can "we acknowledge the Holy Scriptures in their entirety as the inspired Word of God." If such an unscriptural conclusion is abhorrent to the A. L. C. or Missouri Synod, they can avoid it only by rejecting the technical phraseology which is the premise for this conclusion, and by adopting such clear, unequivocal, and non-technical wording as that of our Catechism or "Brief Statement." It is very easy to express clearly the pure Scriptural doctrine of inspiration in varying forms of words, if only there is the determination to see to it that the wording shall admit of only one clear understanding. Here, for instance, is a definition different both from that of our Catechism and of our "Brief Statement," *but which unmistakably means the same thing*, as formulated by the Reformed writer, Richard W. Hiley, quoted by Gaussen: "This miraculous operation of the Holy Ghost had not the *writers* themselves for its object, — these were only His instruments, and were soon to pass away; — its objects were the *holy books* themselves." This accords also with 1 Corinthians 2, 13. In this fundamental passage, while the subject is first person plural, the quality of being "taught of the Spirit" (which could certainly be attributed to human beings without doing violence to Greek idiom) is, nevertheless, not connected directly with the subject (as, e. g., "being taught of the Spirit, we speak") but with the *words* used by the subject: "which things also we speak . . . in (words) taught of the Spirit." Now we do not wish to deny that the writers of Scripture were "inspired men;" nay, we affirm this as a deduction from the fact that they were chosen as the agents for the communi-

cation of God's inspired message; for since they were impelled by the Holy Spirit to speak inspired words, they can for that reason be regarded, derivatively, as inspired speakers. But what we wish to bring out is that, while the inspiration of the words is the clear and explicit teaching of Scripture, the inspiration of the men is no more than a legitimate deduction therefrom. Inspiration was not constant with the men in everything they might choose to write, but it was constant with their writing whenever the Holy Ghost moved them to write Holy Scripture: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

Why not Confess "Verbal Inspiration"?

The most alarming light, however, is shed upon the technical phraseology, "supplied content and fitting word" (not "words"), and "the Holy Scriptures in their entirety," by Dr. Arndt's frank explanation, in the *Lutheran Witness* article before mentioned, of the reason why the term "verbal inspiration" is not employed. As chairman of the Missouri Synod's Committee for Doctrinal Unity special weight must be attached to his words on this matter as to the words of a man who knows whereof he speaks. It is true that his explanation of this point is not offered as his personal opinion, nor as representing the result of committee deliberations, but rather as an expression from the discussions on the floor of Synod. Yet it is offered in such a way as not to imply any dissent from this explanation on the part of the writer or of the committee of which he is chairman. The explanation is as follows: "It was pointed out that the term 'verbal inspiration' is not employed because it is frequently interpreted to signify a mechanical view of inspiration, a mere dictation process, which would violate definite statements of the Scriptures." If this indeed is the reason for avoiding the term "verbal inspiration," — and I am convinced that it is, — then the failure to speak of the "words" and "parts" of Scripture must carry the full technical significance ordinarily implied by such language, for thereby, as well as by the avoidance of the term "verbal inspiration," the document escapes the charge of teaching a "mechanical view." Granted that "word" *could* mean "every word," and granted that "the Holy Scriptures in their entirety" *could* include "all their parts and words . . . also those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters" (Brief Statement); yet if there were anything in the "Common Confession" to indicate that its phraseology should be so understood it could certainly not escape the charge of teaching a "mechanical view."

Certain clear expositions of Scriptural truths

have a way of producing a uniform reaction from their opponents, which an apparently slight change in phraseology will obviate, without, however, changing the opponent's position. Such a change in the reaction of an opponent, without any expressed reversal of his position, is a dangerous warning us that the new phraseology which we may still understand in our way admits of his understanding it also in his way. There is no meeting of minds, but an ambiguity of language. Let us illustrate the point by several significant quotations from Rektor Martin Hein's "Evaluation of Bad Boll, Translated by Dr. J. T. Mueller." On page 7 Dr. Mueller is reported by Rektor Hein as having said: "Verbal inspiration is not tantamount to mechanical inspiration. God never acts mechanically. His operation is always divinely miraculous. Scripture, of course, has also its 'human side,' that is, God accommodated Himself, when giving us His Word, to our human way of thinking and speaking." The last sentence of this quotation immediately reminds us of a familiar passage in Quenstedt regarding the varying styles of the writers. The whole quotation commands our unqualified assent. We do not need to be told that it did not command the assent of the "Landeskirche" theologians. Verbal inspiration may indeed be "no longer the 'Schreckgespenst' of former days" to them, and they may listen respectfully to such an exposition, but they do not assent to it. A later remark of another Missouri representative, however, did command such assent. When Dr. Graebner stated: "Not *Wörterinspiration*, but *Wortinspiration*," Licentiatius Hoffmann (the outline of whose essay certainly exhibits more of the "dissensus of formulation" than of the "consensus of matter" with the corresponding essay of Dr. Mueller) was able to respond: "The real antithesis is not considerable, especially not if it is admitted that the doctrine concerns the Word, and not vocables." (The last quotations are on page 11 of the above-mentioned pamphlet, while the summary of Licentiatius Hoffmann's essay runs from page 8 to page 10.) The change of reaction is due to the fact that the formulation: "Not inspiration of words, but inspiration of the Word," is not sound. Since the Word consists of words, its inspiration includes the inspiration of the words of which it consists. If the Holy Spirit did not put the very words which they wrote into the minds of the writers (Catechism, Question 10), then it cannot be true that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

We are confronted with a similar situation of avoiding the opponent's normal reaction by departing from the form of sound words when metaphors, many of which have been in common use in the church throughout most of its history,

such as, "amanuenses, secretaries, hands, pens, dictation," are repudiated, and when it is even asserted that such language "would violate definite statements of the Scriptures." *We wonder which statements of Scripture have been violated by such language of the ancient Church Fathers, the old Lutheran theologians, and many Synodical Conference theologians.* None of these eminent men possesses any normative authority for us. But in this point we are convinced that, instead of violating definite statements of Scripture, they had learned this way of illustrating the relation of the sacred writers to the Holy Spirit, as His organs or instruments in communicating His Word to men in written form, from definite statements of Scripture. We shall quote some of these statements. In Psalm 45, 1 the Psalmist says: "My tongue is the pen of a ready writer." In II Samuel 23, 2 David says: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His Word was in my tongue." In John 1, 23 St. John the Baptist describes himself as "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." And what does the frequent quotation formula, "spoken by the Lord through the prophet" or "by the mouth of His holy prophets," imply but the relation of mere instrumentality, whereby the holy writers wrote not their own but God's Word? Cf. Matthew 1, 22 and 2, 15; Acts 1, 16 and 4, 25; Luke 1, 70, etc.

"Putting words into the mind" (Catechism, Question 10), or "giving Scripture by inspiration," is quite appropriately called "dictation." It is just as fitting to call the giving of words into the mind a dictation as it is to call the giving of a present into the hand a donation. Nothing "mechanical" is implied in "dictation," since only intelligence can take dictation and transmit that which is dictated to other intelligent beings. Modern recording devices do not "take dictation"; they merely record the voice. Moreover, as Dr. Mueller correctly stated at Bad Boll: "God never acts mechanically. His operation is always divinely miraculous." But dictation is a communication of words to the mind; and why should such an illustration (for it is no more than an illustration, and cannot be raised to the questionable dignity of a "dictation theory"; cf. Lenski's Interpretation of Revelation, pp. 93 and 94, on this point) be repudiated, if thereby the high and unfathomable miracle of God, whereby He communicates His words to a human mind, can be made clear to a child? The reason for repudiating it, and avoiding the term "verbal inspiration" which it illustrates, seems to be that thereby we obviate the charge of teaching a "mechanical view of inspiration." But that is a very perilous course on which I refuse to embark. While obviously there are no grounds for urging the

use of the "dictation" phraseology or any of the older churchly metaphors in a confession of faith, and only the alleged grounds for repudiating them are disputed; *there is just as obviously a compelling reason for insisting on the use of the term "verbal inspiration" in a confessional document dated in the year 1950. Its omission is an altogether insuperable obstacle to our acceptance of such a document. And when we are frankly told that it is omitted in order to escape the charge of "a mechanical view of inspiration" the urgency upon our conscience to reject such a document becomes even more stringent.*

The Biblical teaching of verbal inspiration which has always been held and defended by the Missouri Synod, and which I accept with all my heart, for the sake of which twenty-four years ago I left the U. L. C., is none other than that teaching which has for generations been designated by its opponents as the mechanical theory, — though of course I reject that designation of it as a misrepresentation. An analogous case is that of the Biblical teaching of the real presence, accepted by all who deserve the name Lutheran. This is none other than that teaching which has for generations been designated by the Reformed as "consubstantiation," though of course we rightly reject that false nomenclature. A faithful Lutheran dare not disclaim the term verbal inspiration "because it is frequently interpreted to signify a mechanical view of inspiration," just as a faithful Lutheran dare not disclaim the term real presence because it is frequently interpreted to signify consubstantiation.

Can We Afford to Evade This Reproach?

"God alone, if we wish to speak accurately, is to be called the Author of the Sacred Scriptures; the Prophets and Apostles cannot be called the authors, except by a kind of catachresis, as those who were rather the pens of God, the Author, and the secretaries and amanuenses of the Holy Spirit, the Arch-scribe, who dictated and inspired the Word." Quenstedt, I, p. 56 (Wittenberg, 1685). This is not a mechanical concept of inspiration. The "mechanical theory" of inspiration is indeed not a view which has never been held by anyone throughout the whole history of the Christian Church. It was held in the time of the ancient Church, *not*, however, by Cyprian, Augustine, and other orthodox Fathers, but by Tertullian and the Montanists. Indeed, even the pagans held a mechanical theory of the inspiration of their oracles, and even Origen carefully warned off a possibility of misunderstanding the Christian doctrine of inspiration as analogous to that heathen concept. And though the false accusation of holding a "mechanical theory" has often

been refuted since those days, and by better theologians than Origen, for instance, by our Quenstedt, yet scarcely a theologian of the ancient or mediaeval church, except the heretical sects, and such individual stragglers from the central path of ecclesiastical thoughts as Theodore of Mopsuestia, Euthymius Zigabenus, and Abelard, will be exonerated of the charge by modern theologians. The Anglo-Catholics reject at this point what they otherwise accept as the "consensus of orthodox antiquity;" and the classic Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century as well as faithful Lutheran teachers of the past generation or of the present are at this point condemned by Lutherans as Calvinizing literalists. The charge of "mechanical theories" is directed by Lutherans against the Scripture-founded doctrine of the Lutheran Church. We believers in verbal inspiration do not hold that the sacred writers wrote any part of the Scriptures as helpless, unthinking, unconscious tools of the Holy Spirit. No, they really believed and felt in their hearts the messages which the Holy Spirit gave them to write. This was the position of Quenstedt. This was the position of Walther and Hoenecke and Pieper, and of Lenski too. This is the position which we find expressed in Scripture itself, to which we confess ourselves, and which we shall continue to insist upon calling by its right name. This is our honest conviction. Opponents may disagree with this doctrine, and reject the testimony of Scripture concerning itself; they may, and doubtless will, continue to designate it as a mechanical view of inspiration. But as long as the epithet is levelled against the teaching of God's own Word in 2 Timothy 3, 16; 2 Peter 1, 21; and 1 Corinthians 2, 13 (and many other passages), we shall regard it as part of the reproach of Christ, which we cannot evade without unfaithfulness to basic elements of the doctrine which we have learned, and from which doctrine, God helping us, "we have determined not to depart even a finger's breadth either from the subjects themselves or from the phrases which are found in them." (Preface to the Christian Book of Concord, Triglotta, p. 23.)

W. H. M.

ON THE UNION FRONT

Convention Roundup

The United Evangelical Lutheran Church (Danish), meeting June 13-18, voted unanimously to proceed with the 3-way merger which would unite it with the American Lutheran Church and

the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norw.). But it voted against a proposal to transform the National Lutheran Council into a "federation" of its participating bodies. The U. E. L. C. believes in the "eventual merger" of all N. L. C. bodies, but is satisfied with the N. L. C. as it is for the present.

The Lutheran Free Church, meeting June 14-18, favored "in principle" the transforming of the N. L. C. from a common agency into a "federation," although it had voted against merging all the bodies of the N. L. C. the previous year.

The Augustana Lutheran Church (Swedish background), meeting June 6-11 at Washington, D. C., denounced "war as a crime against God and humanity." This Church again went on record as approving "organic merger," or, failing that, certain "lesser moves" toward merging Lutheran bodies. The United Lutheran Church also has long favored organic merger of all American Lutheran bodies.

The Suomi Synod (Finnish background), meeting June 14-18, approved "federation" but not merging, of the bodies in the N. L. C.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norw.), also meeting in June, voted to go ahead with the contemplated 3-way merger (Evangelical Lutheran Church, American Lutheran Church and United Evangelical Lutheran Church). The E. L. C., following the U. E. L. C., voted to repeat the invitation to the other two bodies within the American Lutheran Conference (namely the Augustana Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Free Church) to join in the merger, making it a 5-way merger, and turning the American Lutheran Conference into a merged church body.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church, by unanimous voice vote, rejected proposals to form either a "federation" or a merger of all eight bodies of the National Lutheran Council. It was satisfied to keep the N. L. C. as an "agency" for the present.

All Districts of the American Lutheran Church have met this year. Twelve of the Districts have voiced approval of the proposed 3-way merger. The thirteenth District (Minn.) wanted more time to study the matter. The predictors are predicting that the A. L. C. biennial convention in October will overwhelmingly approve of taking the next step leading toward merger.

Doctrine seems to have become a side issue in most of these maneuverings.

The conventions of the U. L. C. and of the A. L. C. were to have been held in October, and will be reviewed within the next few issues.

Milwaukee to the Outsider

What are the National Lutheran Council constituents making of the Milwaukee convention of the Missouri Synod? In general, we note two trends of opinion in the press of the N. L. C. bodies. The Milwaukee convention seems to have boosted their hopes of eventually getting Missouri to cooperate with them on their terms. Also, in looking about for a goat which shall be blamed for the Missouri Synod's aloofness, they seem to have settled upon the Wisconsin Synod (Missouri's sister synod) as the main culprit. In forming these opinions, they have been aided and abetted by the public and private utterances of leading Statementarians in Missouri's midst.

Missouri Moves

This is the heading of an editorial in the *Lutheran Outlook* of the American Lutheran Conference, August, p. 230, from which we quote the following few sentences:

"Three points about the convention of the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod last month in Milwaukee are heartening to those who hope for cooperation of all Lutherans this side of heaven.

"One was its action in regard to cooperation with the National Lutheran Council . . . a committee will be appointed to consult with the National Lutheran Council with regard to possible areas of cooperation.

"The second point was in connection with the doctrinal agreement drawn up by an intersynodical committee of the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. . . . I doubt whether the Wisconsin Synod will be willing to give its consent in this case, but that is not something that can be laid at the door of the Missouri Synod. One 'but' was a special resolution to the effect that acceptance of the doctrinal agreement does not establish church fellowship with the American Lutheran Church. But the same resolution authorized the president of the Missouri Synod, 'when by the grace of God everything necessary for fellowship has been accomplished,' to announce the fact officially.

"... But in spite of the letter from Wisconsin, the Missouri Synod reaffirmed its position on scouting, leaving the matter to the jurisdiction of the local congregation.

"So there it is: a tentative step in the direction of cooperation with the National Lutheran Council; a definite step in the direction of fellowship with the American Lutheran Church; and a refusal to take a backward step at the behest of the Wisconsin Synod."

Old Missouri Had a Blind Spot

From the News Jottings of Editor Schramm in the *Lutheran Standard* (A. L. C.), July 29, p. 10:

"You know, it is commonly said that every man has a moral or spiritual 'blind spot.' . . . I think similar 'blind spots' may be found in church bodies.

"To be specific, the fact that the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod, great champion of correct Bible interpretation that it is, should spend a week arguing about the application of Romans 16:17, 18 to its membership in the National Lutheran Council and its relationships to fellow Lutherans strikes me as revealing a 'blind spot' in this great body of good Christians. This is the way Romans 16:17, 18 reads: 'Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.' Now how in the name of common sense and of truth and of Jesus Christ, who bids us love one another, can any group of intelligent, God-fearing Christians take a passage that warns against fellowship with idolaters and lying deceivers and apply it to fellow believers in Christ, indeed, to fellow Lutherans? That, I admit, is one of the things that is too wonderful for me. I grant the Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod the right, on the basis of its peculiar approach to this whole subject of Lutheran unity (which seems marked more by logic than by love) to stay out of the National Lutheran Council. But I do wish they would quit prostituting the Word of God to bolster up their scholastic argumentation. That gives offense. It's that kind of manhandling of the Word of God that gets a church body into the unlovely separatism that marks the Wisconsin Synod — a separatism which many in the Missouri Synod now recognize in the Wisconsin Synod, but which Missouri seems unable to recognize in itself.

"No Romans 16:17, 18 no more applies to us eight bodies in the National Lutheran Council than it does to the Missouri Synod. What applies to all us Lutherans in America is the word of Jesus Christ, our common Lord, Brother, Savior, Friend: 'One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren,' Matthew 23:8."

So far the Editor. To begin at the end, we note that Matth. 23:8 refers to authority among Christians (cp. context) and is certainly not an admonition to overlook doctrinal error (cp. context). It is a misapplication of Scripture to ask

us to acknowledge any errorists (also the lodge "brethren") as brethren in the visible church.

The Editor's "blind spot" is apparent when one reads Romans 16:17, which clearly tells Christians to "mark" and "avoid" them "which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned." Missouri ought to regard anyone, even a Lutheran, even a Lutheran in her own midst, who persists with un-Biblical doctrine, as dangerous, and not listen to the fair speeches of men like the *Standard's* Editor.

The Editor should then read Romans 16:18, as it stands. "They that are such," namely the errorists described in Romans 16:17, are now evaluated by God. The reading of verse 18 shows that God does not hold a very high evaluation of errorists. The Missouri Synod by tradition has agreed with God. This is no crime. We may have apologies to make for other things, but we have no reason to apologize for repeating the application which God makes in Romans 16:17, 18.

As to love, we think a lot of Christian love. But with Luther we want to know nothing of a love that would lead us to deny a single word or doctrine of God's Word, for that is not Christian love.

Note how the Editor begins with such terms as "great champion of correct Bible interpretation" but comes to such expressions as "prostituting" and "manhandling" the Word of God "to bolster up their scholastic argumentation." Colored editorializing, to say the least.

Milwaukee — Whose Victory?

The Editor of the *Lutheran Standard* was not finished. He continued in the issue of August 19, p. 9, as follows:

"By no means everyone at the recent convention of the Missouri Synod approved a legalistic application of Romans 16:17, 18 to fellow Christians. I received further . . . and very encouraging . . . information (punctuation in original — A. V. K.) on this matter after I had written about it in my News Jottings for July 29. In fact, what I have since learned constrains me to say that the 'blind spot' which I alleged exists in the Missouri Synod on this point has been to quite an extent dissipated by light and love. At that convention the discussion of Romans 16:17, 18 centered not in an effort of the synod as such to apply that passage to fellow Christians and fellow Lutherans but in an effort of a relatively small but determined group to apply that passage to all who disagree with them including . . . and especially . . . outstanding members of their own Synod. This little group of vocal men wanted

the Missouri Synod to give an official interpretation of the passage that could be used to cudgel men of the type of the signers of the so-called 'Statement of the Forty-two' (Forty-four is correct — A. V. K.) that was drafted in 1945. The fact that the convention refused to give an official interpretation of the passage and recognized that 'there may be legitimate differences of opinion in purely exegetical matters, constituted a victory for the growing element that shares the convictions of the 'Forty-two.'

"It is apropos in this connection to quote Section Five of the 'Statement of the Forty-two.' That section reads: 'We affirm our conviction that sound exegetical procedure is the basis for sound Lutheran theology.' To this affirmation, the following pointed application is appended: 'We therefore deplore the fact that Romans 16:17, 18 has been applied to all Christians who differ from us in certain points of doctrine. It is our conviction, based on sound exegetical and hermeneutical principles, that this text does not apply to the present situation in the Lutheran Church of America.' — It is now my understanding that the debate on Romans 16:17, 18 at the Missouri Synod convention really resulted in a victory for that viewpoint. And that makes me happy."

A Few Observations and Questions

Editor Schramm reveals the strengthening unofficial alliance between the Statementarian left wing of the Missouri Synod and the powers that be within the A. L. C.

When the Editor writes that there are those within the Missouri Synod who want to apply Rom. 16:17, 18 "to all who disagree with them," we are sure that he hardly realizes the untruth of those words. And when reference is made to "cudgeling" — the level of polemics has descended too low to be worthy of further note.

What has happened to the opinion that, since the "Agreement" concerning "A Statement," entered into by the Praesidium and the Statementarians in 1947, the "A Statement" has been "withdrawn from discussion?"

A question for study by the Missouri Synod during the next three years: Is Rom. 16:17, 18 a clear passage or is it now removed to the realm of the "purely exegetical" where differences of opinion are "legitimate?" The Statementarians seem to have found a convenient loophole in the 1950 synodical resolutions, so that the position of Luther and the fathers of the Missouri Synod on Rom. 16:17, 18 may now be set aside. This no real Missourian will allow.

When the Editor refers to the "little group of vocal men" who wanted an "official interpretation"

of Rom. 16:17, 18, we wonder if he, or his informer, means the convention Committee on Doctrinal and Intersynodical Matters (No. 3), which presented the traditional "interpretation" of the Missouri Synod and contended for its acceptance. The men on the committee did not base their claims on "exegetical procedure," as "A Statement" had done, but on the words of Scripture themselves. That is correct. What is not Biblical is not theological.

Folks may not be quite certain of what the Missouri Synod meant or said at Milwaukee, but they can always be certain of what God says in His Scripture. They can say: "I know that my Redeemer liveth"; and they can affirm: "The Law of God is perfect. The statutes of the Lord are right." For which we shall thank Him without end.

A. V. K.

⊙ Review of Publications

Ten Studies in the Creed, by Jacob Tanner. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. 112 pages, 5½×7¾; paper covers. Price: 40 cents.

This monograph is one of some fifteen "Ten Week Teacher Training Course Books," published under the auspices of the Board of Parish Education of The Evangelical Lutheran Church (Norwegian merger). As a whole this monograph, based on Luther's Explanation of the Three Articles, breathes a truly Lutheran spirit, and yet here and there the author's liberalism crops out.

Dr. Tanner regards the Bible merely as a "record of God's self-revelation unto salvation," and in consequence teaches an *inspiration of men* and not of words. "The Holy Spirit enabled the authors of the Bible to select the right material for their purposes, and to choose out of their vocabularies the words that correctly conveyed the meaning." (P. 6.) Scripture, however, clearly teaches an *inspiration of words*, I Cor. 2:13; II Tim. 3:16. Such inspiration of words excludes all error and even its possibility, for God cannot err. But the mere inspiration of men does not guarantee the inerrancy of the Bible in all its parts and words.

Regarding the "creation days" of Gen. 1, the author raises objection against the traditional understanding that "day means a period of twenty-four hours." He raises no objections to the explanation "that day means a long period which may have lasted for thousands of years," but seems to favor the idea "that by day is meant a day's work." He says, "The Bible describes

the creation as six creative acts, each presented as a day's work in order to give the basis for man's division of his time." P. 28.) Thus the author leaves it undecided what kind of days are actually meant. This clearly contradicts the plain words of Gen. 1:5. There we are told that God divided the light (which He called "Day") from the darkness (which He called "Night"). Thus the evening (the end of that called "Day") and the morning (the end of that called "Night") were the first day, that is, the first twenty-four hours. That the creation days must be regarded as ordinary days of twenty-four hours is also borne out by Exodus 20:9ff.: "Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: but the *seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God*: in it thou shalt not do any work. . . . For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth . . . and *rested the seventh day*: wherefore the Lord *blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.*"

D.

⊙ What Our Readers Say

"I can't afford to miss the *Confessional Lutheran*. Since things went the way they did at the convention, our only hope lies in the *Confessional Lutheran* to proclaim ever louder and louder the truths of Scripture. May God give you, who are on the staff of the *Confessional Lutheran* courage and grace to stand firm and unmovable. You will need it, and I will need it, because opposition now will rear its ugly head higher than ever, having been encouraged to do so by the convention." — Pastor, Iowa.

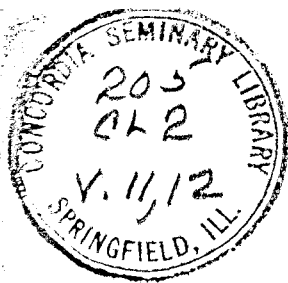
"More power to the *Confessional Lutheran*, the most inexpensive theological magazine on the market and the *best* magazine for pastors." — Pastor, Minnesota.

The "COMMON CONFESSION" Must Be Repudiated

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD



Prof. R. Neitzel, D.D. 3-27
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ELIZABETH, ILLINOIS
Permit No. 7



PUBLISHED IN THE INTEREST OF LUTHERAN UNITY

MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XI

DECEMBER, 1950

NUMBER 12

IN THIS ISSUE: Curse Ye Meroz — The Unconstitutionality of the Missouri Synod's Resolution on the "Common Confession" — The Lutheran Confessions in the American Lutheran Church — Luther's Doctrine of the Church — On the Union Front — Review of Publications — What Our Readers Say.

● Curse Ye Meroz

"CURSE YE MEROZ, SAID THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, CURSE YE BITTERLY THE INHABITANTS THEREOF; BECAUSE THEY CAME NOT TO THE HELP OF THE LORD, TO THE HELP OF THE LORD AGAINST THE MIGHTY." Judges 5:23.

A great victory had been won in the plain of Esdraelon and along the mountain edges of the Little Hermon. The fierce enemy had fled, completely routed.

Such a glorious victory deserved a solemn triumph. As soon as possible a day of thanksgiving was appointed to be celebrated by all Israel. Thankful returns were to be made to God, and all glory was to be rendered Him for the ex-

cellency of the work performed by the good servants of the victors.

"Then sang Deborah and Barak . . . on that day."

But while God is to receive all glory, His instruments, too, are to receive due recognition. Deborah takes notice of those who had been on the Lord's side.

But hearken! In the midst of this triumphal song a harsh, strident sound jars the melody. The jubilant chords are broken by shrill tones. Discordant strings are struck.

In recounting the valorous deeds of the tribes she bethinks herself of one community that had hung back: *Meroz had not come to the help of the Lord.*

THE CONFSSIONAL LUTHERAN

Published in the Interest of Ecumenical Lutheranism
By the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau
(One Dollar Per Year)

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Articles intended for publication are to be addressed to
the office of publication: Box 73, Clinton, Iowa.

Subscriptions (\$1.00 per year) are to be sent to
Rev. Carl G. Kruse, 826 W. 19th Street, Chicago 8, Illinois.
Please notify us promptly of any change of address.

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Sustaining membership \$10.00 or more per year. Each type
of membership includes a subscription to the "Confessional
Lutheran."

TRACT DEPARTMENT: Box 4, Elizabeth, Illinois.

Meroz had heard the trumpet of the messenger running through the land and had seen the signal fires on the hilltops beckoning to the tribes of Israel and summoning them to action. She knew that this summons was meant for her as well as for the rest. But when every patriot rallied to the good service of the common fatherland with the battle-cry, We are coming, Mother Deborah! then the disloyal inhabitants of Meroz came not to the help of the Lord.

There may have been various vain excuses made for this inaction and failure of duty. Perhaps Meroz thought in callous selfishness: We are not in danger; we are not losing anything. for we are hidden away in some safe valley. So she nestled herself the more snugly while the bat-

tle was raging on the other side of the hills. Perhaps she thought in pretended humility: What can we impart to the ranks of our people that would dismay the foe? What would Barak care for our support or Sisera for our hostility? So Meroz lay still and let the other tribes do the work for the common cause—and came not to the help of the Lord.

It is not personal anger nor carnal passion. Deborah speaks as the mouthpiece of God. This rebuke is pronounced "by the angel of the Lord," i. e., Jesus, before His incarnation, the Captain of the hosts, who looks upon those who are not with Him as being against Him. Deborah knew that the cause of the Lord had been in grave danger. It seems as if it had been barely saved. And here sat this town, whose weight might have furnished just what was needed to turn the doubtful scales. Here it sat all through the critical day looking on—and doing nothing.

Meroz is no more. Nothing but this rebuke remains. Probably after the Angel of the Lord pronounced this curse, it dwindled and, like that fig-tree which Jesus cursed by the wayside, withered away and sank into oblivion.

Meroz stands for the shirker, the "slacker." Though completely passed from the face of the earth, it stands as a sort of symbol or synonym for him who is willing to see other people fight the battle of life, while he simply looks on doing nothing; for him who shifts off a duty and is perfectly content in such evasion; for him who comes in to enjoy the benefits of tasks for which others have planned and labored and suffered. Upon such the indelible mark of disgrace is stamped in the word "Meroz."

Lutheran Witness, 1924, p. 126f.

Submitted by Rev. Arthur W. Oetting.

❶ The Unconstitutionality of the Missouri Synod's Resolution on the "Common Confession"

The Marks of a Unionistic Fellowship

The distinguishing characteristic of a unionistic church body is the toleration of false doctrine within its fellowship. Even though an official confession of a unionistic body may be fully orthodox, this orthodoxy in confession is nullified by permitting not only the true, but also a false position, to exist alongside of the true. In such a body false doctrine, publicly advocated, is not dealt with at once and removed by the application of doctrinal discipline, but is tolerated by synodical officials and by the membership as such. This unionistic spirit will show itself particularly

also by readiness to adopt and put into effect resolutions on doctrinal matters by a *majority vote*. It is characteristic of a unionistic fellowship that doctrinal resolutions involving consciences, though adopted only by a majority vote, are allowed to stand as the decision of the entire group, be it congregation, pastoral conference, or synodical convention.

That the above-mentioned characteristics of a unionistic fellowship are today found also in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was clearly pointed out in dozens of carefully documented memorials presented to the 1947 and 1950 conventions of the Missouri Synod. These memorials call attention to a number of doctrinal errors that have been allowed to stand unretracted within our fellowship.

What the Scriptures Require

But at its 1950 convention in Milwaukee Synod took a further step on its unionistic march by accepting the "Common Confession" by a mere majority vote. In spite of the fact that dozens of men had pointed out that this document does not meet the requirements of God's Word for a statement of agreement with the American Lutheran Church on the doctrines treated, and even though a minority vote (estimated conservatively at forty or fifty votes) was voiced against this doctrinal resolution, the "Common Confession" was nevertheless offered to the A.L.C. "as a statement of agreement on these doctrines between us and the A.L.C." During the discussion which preceded that vote there was plainly evident a growing impatience with the chairman for even permitting men to voice their conscientious objections against the document, and those who favored the adoption of the document made no efforts to show that the "Common Confession" excludes and rejects the false doctrines taught today in the A.L.C.

The readiness on the part of the Milwaukee convention to submit this doctrinal statement to the A.L.C. on the basis of nothing more than a majority vote is clearly an offense against the Scriptural requirement in 1 Cor. 1:10: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Faithfulness to this injunction of our Lord should have moved the convention to resolve to make every effort to bring about unity on these important doctrinal matters in our own midst first, and only then to proceed to submit a unanimously adopted doctrinal statement to another church-body for ac-

ceptance as a joint statement of doctrinal agreement.

What Does Missouri's Constitution Say?

The action of the Milwaukee convention with respect to the "Common Confession" was also *unconstitutional*. Article VIII, C of Synod's constitution stipulates: "All matters of doctrine and of conscience shall be decided only by the Word of God. All other matters shall be decided by a majority vote." Even though the acceptance or rejection of the "Common Confession" was a most serious matter of doctrine and conscience, yet the convention at least tacitly accepted the ruling of the chair that the majority vote cast in favor of the "Common Confession" had decided the matter as far as the Missouri Synod was concerned.

This is something new in the history of our Synod, that matters of doctrine and conscience are decided by a majority vote. It has always been the rule in our midst that doctrinal resolutions must be unanimous, and this rule has been conscientiously followed at congregation meetings, pastoral conferences and synodical conventions. The Kansas District declared in 1901: "There must be unanimous agreement on all doctrinal questions." "It is particularly on this point that we can never place too much emphasis: namely, unity of doctrine; and to this there belongs not only the fact that we as a synod, as a whole, be united in doctrine, and that on doctrinal matters at our synodical conventions we permit only a unanimous agreement to stand (as valid), but that also in our congregations and at their meetings it remain a fundamental law: on all doctrinal questions — and to this belongs also the introduction of books for religious instruction — there must be unanimous agreement." (Kansas District Proceedings 1901, p.p. 28, 33.) Compare also Proceedings, Central District, XIX, p. 52ff; Walther's *Pastorale*, p. 372; Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, p. 317ff, and other official pronouncements of the Missouri Synod.

Proper Procedure in an Orthodox Church Body

In an orthodox church-body such a doctrinal question as the acceptance of the "Common Confession" may never be decided by vote, unanimous or otherwise, but alone by God's Word. When serious disagreement arises with respect to a new statement of doctrinal agreement, and dozens of men inform the Church that they cannot agree to it for reasons of conscience bound in God's Word, then surely an orthodox body will not rush the matter through by a majority vote, but will allow the Word of God to decide the question.

It will ask all to study the document in the light of God's Word, knowing that the divine Word itself alone can bring to a full agreement in this matter all who are willing to bow to that Word. And if such a study should expose some who are unwilling to submit to God's Word or who may stubbornly demand more than that Word demands, such will of course have to be admonished and, if necessary, dealt with according to the principles of doctrinal discipline. When these God-pleasing steps for attaining full agreement on a doctrinal matter have been followed, then God's Word itself is allowed to make the decision, the vote being merely an agreement to that decision by all who sincerely bow to that Word.

Our Plain Christian Duty

We are informed that at this time the "Common Confession" is being studied by many of our congregations. We would recommend that the congregations not only inform Synod's Doctrinal Unity Committee on which points this document fails to meet the requirements of God's Word for a statement of agreement on the doctrines treated, but that they also protest to Synod's officials against proceeding any further in this matter on the basis of a mere majority vote. Let them inform Synod in no uncertain terms that all steps taken with the "Common Confession" are unconstitutional and invalid, since they rest on a majority vote.

The stipulation that all matters of doctrine and of conscience are to be decided only by God's Word and all other matters by a majority vote, was put into Synod's constitution as the most important safeguard against having Synod become a unionistic body. Having signed that constitution as a condition for membership, our congregations should not allow this flagrant violation of Article VIII to stand, but ought to insist that the matter of the "Common Confession" be decided by God's Word alone with unanimous agreement to that decision, as our constitution stipulates. They should protest any and all further action with regard to the "Common Confession" as unconstitutional, until this important provision of our synodical bill of rights has been lived up to. It is of greatest importance that this be done, since the very orthodoxy of Synod is at stake.

A. T. K.

❶ The Lutheran Confessions in the American Lutheran Church

A great deal of reading was required to get at the latest statement of the "Sandusky doctrine"

(1938) of the American Lutheran Church, to the effect that "it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines," as this lies before us in Pastor John Kuethe's essay delivered before the Texas District Convention of the A.L.C., at Galveston, Texas, April 18, 1950. We first read the mimeographed copy of the entire paper, entitled "The Lutheran Confessions in the Light of Modern Day Movements and Needs." This essay was so well received in the A.L.C. that, after a very thorough reworking by its author, it was printed in three installments in the *Lutheran Standard*: "These Lutheran Confessions of Ours" (August 26), "This Modern World of Ours" (September 2), and "This Glorious Opportunity of Ours" (September 9). Since the somewhat condensed and carefully rewritten form of the essay as it appears in print is greatly improved in language and presentation, we regard it as only fair to base our comments upon this revision only.

Pastor Kuethe's presentation is not likely to lead anyone into the study of the Confessions. It would rather leave the impression upon anyone not previously acquainted with the Confessions that all which is really worth while in them can be gathered from this series of three articles. In fact, the second of the three articles flatly states: "Their exact letter will not help us." If so, why read them? "Most of us will probably not read them either . . . but we can try to understand them in a fresh way that seeks out the spirit of them." The dots in that sentence do not indicate that we have omitted anything in our quotation. The author of the article uses them. His statement is arrant nonsense. To try to understand the spirit of the Confessions without reading them, without paying attention to their exact letter, may indeed be the way to find the "Sandusky doctrine" in them, but is certainly not the way to understand the Confessions.

"These Lutheran Confessions of Ours"

"These Lutheran Confessions of Ours" are not much more than an excuse for a discussion of "Lutheran unity" from the standpoint, announced early in the first article, of "learning how to attain Lutheran unity in the midst of legitimate Lutheran diversity." In discussing the historical importance of the Augsburg Confession, the writer forgets his theme to assail a recent article in his own church paper on the contemplated union of the A.L.C. with the E.L.C. (Norwegian Church) which stated: "Such a union will demand strict adherence to the revealed Word of God, the Bible, as the only rule for faith and life, and include a uniform attitude toward the Lu-

theran confessions, resulting in a conforming practice." Such a statement he regards as springing "from a Calvinistic and not a Lutheran attitude, making of the Bible and the confessions lawbooks to which we conform or else get excommunicated from fellowship for non-conformity." The Formula of Concord is depreciated for being "more occupied with human words and phrases and less occupied with the vital religious force of the Reformation," and it is said to "play with the temptation of forcing the Lutheran Church into becoming a sect." Its contents are "such difficult and somewhat speculative questions as the nature of original sin, the nature of conversion, the relation of faith to good works, the precise Lutheran approach to the Lord's Supper, etc." We pause to query, just how much a subscription to the Confessions is worth in a church-body where they can be man-handled in this fashion in a series of "excellent articles," a "stimulating paper?"

"This Modern World of Ours"

The treatment of "This Modern World of Ours" in the second article leans heavily on the Amsterdam Assembly book, "Man's Disorder and God's Design." In language which is sometimes drastic and striking, sometimes not quite intelligible, it rehashes the analysis of the world's ills which has become so familiar in our age of crisis, and finds the cure in salvation, which is rather dogmatically declared to mean "wholeness," "not just the wholeness of individuals but of God's creation, too, a creation that is groaning for redemption." The connotation of "health" which attaches to the Greek word for "salvation," especially in certain connections, cannot be denied; but we do not believe that the author makes the idea clearer to lay readers by substituting "wholeness" for the familiar term.

The two great movements within the church today, as the author sees it, are the movement toward Lutheran unity, and "the ecumenical movement, the agency of which is the World Council of Churches," toward each of which the writer takes a very positive, favorable, and completely uncritical attitude. He makes the most of the scandal of denominationalism, not hesitating to go beyond the bounds of the factual by speaking of "the claim of six or seven different Christian denominations that each is the only channel of salvation." We wonder which six or seven Christian denominations he could name that make this claim? His own position goes far beyond rejecting such a claim, and completely denies the existence of any confessionally orthodox denomination in the world by stating: "No single de-

nomination meets the needs of all classes and conditions of people." Since the Word of God does meet the needs of all classes and conditions of people, the conclusion is inescapable that in the writer's view no church teaches that Word in its truth and purity.

I am confident that he would not evade or deny this conclusion. It is indeed the chief practical conclusion which he claims to draw from our Confessions. After offering some rather refreshing evidence that he has at least grasped the material principle of the Reformation, the "article of the standing and the falling church," salvation by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, (though the terminology in which he expresses it, "the gracious God who calls the world home to Himself," owes nothing to the Confessions) he proceeds to demonstrate that his emphasis on repentance and forgiveness has a peculiar slant: We are to repent of our doctrine, to ask forgiveness for our teaching! "This dangerous illusion of a perfectly pure teaching and a perfectly pure practice is un-Lutheran and unscriptural. Our hope of Lutheran unity lies in one thing, that all Lutheran bodies admit that we are all sinners in our teaching and in our practice, and that we all alike look to the same God for help." There we have a full statement of the "Sandusky doctrine." We can get together not on the basis of unity of doctrine, but on the admission that no one of us teaches the pure doctrine of God's Word. Here is an ideological basis for the "Common Confession!"

But where the material principle of the Reformation is so sadly misused, all surely cannot be in order with regard to the formal principle, the principle which our *Confession* states in the words: "We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with all teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone." (*Triglotta*, p. 777.) Surely here is an instance in which the writer of these three articles believes that "the exact letter of the confessions will not help us." As already stated, his paper, in its original form as a Synodical essay, was presented in April of this year. Most of the changes made in revising it for the *Lutheran Standard* articles are for the better; but two disconcerting remarks with regard to the Bible as a standard of doctrine, which first appear in these articles (September 2 and September 9, respectively), would seem to be added as a reaction to dissatisfaction with the "Common Confession" position on the Scriptures expressed by some Missourians at and after the Milwaukee Convention. These remarks are: "The greatest need of

modern man is . . . not an absolute Bible worshiped in itself as a new lawbook;" "This religious Center is distinct from . . . Bible-as-lawbook-centered (medieval nominalism) Christianity." The terms which he uses here are certainly not ours, and some of them, such as "*new* lawbook" are scarcely intelligible to us; but we cannot avoid the impression that they are aimed at us old Missourians as well as at Pastor Kuethe's own colleague who desires any A.L.C. union with the E.L.C. to be based on "strict adherence to the revealed Word of God, the Bible, as the only rule for faith and life." Certainly this language, which Pastor Kuethe rejects as "Calvinistic and not Lutheran . . . making of the Bible a lawbook," is the language of the Lutheran Confessions, a language which he himself simply doesn't speak in the articles before us. And the language which he does speak does not make us feel more comfortable about the strange terminology employed with reference to Holy Scripture in the "Common Confession."

"This Glorious Opportunity of Ours"

The third article contains some criticism and admonition addressed to the writer's own church-body, couched in what appears to be terribly trenchant and drastic language, but which we believe the A.L.C. policymakers should find quite to their liking nevertheless. For all this terrific urging of repentance does not lead up to an admonition to retract any unscriptural doctrine which has been held by the A.L.C., but only to be sorry that any distinctive doctrines have kept it separate from others, "that our doctrines have been primarily marks of separation." And all this trenchant language about the church dying for Christ has its upshot merely in a demand for merging with others on the A.L.C.'s own basis, on the basis of the "Sandusky doctrine."

The most serious false premise in this whole unconfessional treatment of the Confessions is that *doctrine*, even though it is based on God's perfect revelation to us, is a work of ours, not a gift of God, and hence necessarily shares in human imperfection, thus branding all claims of unity and purity in doctrine as empty delusions of human pride. The constantly reiterated "We believe, teach, and confess" of our Confessional writings is, upon this premise, a human achievement (a truly synergistic idea of faith and confession), not a divine bestowal, and is therefore a temptation to pride, not an occasion for humble gratitude. And the final practical conclusion from this false premise is that *we* men should achieve union by surrendering some of the cherished but very fallible tenets of the doctrinal system we have constructed, or at least let them stand side

by side with the equally fallible tenets of the other party's doctrinal system ("legitimate diversity"), and thus humbly swallow our pride.

That is indeed "to repent in a *new*, vital way" (author's phraseology, but our emphasis). What else can we make of the following: "Again, if we would listen to the confessions, our church body must not merge with some other church body on the false basis that both bodies can say with pride: 'We are worthy of one another's fellowship because we are both alike in teaching and practice' . . . Our teaching, too, must be justified by faith because it, too, is one of our human 'works,' even though it is based on God's perfect revelation to us. Luther understood this profound fact. Think of his sacristy prayer, in which he prays that he will not with his sermon destroy God's congregation! Woe to us when we no longer depend on the merits of Christ and trust rather in ourselves." In reply to this we can only reiterate: Pure doctrine ("teaching") is simply not our work at all, but God's gift. There is no room in the church for human doctrine, but only for divine doctrine. In God's doctrine, being not our own possession, but His trust, committed unto us not to develop or modify but to keep and confess, we can make no concessions and admit no faults. This our Confessions do teach. Compare the motto at the head of every copy of our *Confessional Lutheran*. And this Luther realized when he gave that peculiar counsel about not praying the Lord's Prayer (the fifth petition, in particular, is meant) after preaching, for after preaching His Word you can rather call upon God to acknowledge what you have said as His own. (St. L. Edit., XVII, 1343-1344.) As for the sacristy prayer, to be used before the sermon, Luther does indeed grant that *without God* he "would have spoiled everything long ago," and that "*if left to himself*" God's work in his hands would come to naught. That is true Christian humility. True Christian humility repents for everything which is of ourselves, and beseeches God to keep all which comes from us, all human contributions, *out of* our preaching and teaching; but it does not repent for what God gives us in His Word, for what we speak after ("*nachsagen*," Luther III, 1890) His holy prophets, evangelists, and apostles, but confesses it, maintains it, earnestly contends for it, and will die rather than yield any of it. This is the Christian humility taught by Luther and the Confessions.

What sort of get-together is it, then, which is being inaugurated by the "Common Confession?" Is it a union based on unity in doctrine and practice? Pastor Kuethe and those who admire his "excellent articles" evidently do not think so; for

they are in favor of it, and they consider unity in doctrine and practice "a false basis for merging." Or is it based simply on the confession that we are all sinners and need forgiveness, plus a little innocuous document of agreement to be read in the light of the "Sandusky doctrine?" If so, surely its scope could be broadened. There are many who confess themselves sinners, and believe in a forgiving God, who belong neither to the A.L.C., nor to the E.L.C., nor to the U.E.L.C., nor to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. What an "ecumenical movement" this could turn out to be!

W. H. M.

● Luther's Doctrine of the Church

(ecclesia invisibilis,
occulta, abscondita)

Dr. P. E. Kretzmann

In the exposition of Luther's Small Catechism as used in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod question 176 reads: "Why do you say, 'I believe' in the Church?" And the answer is, "A. Because the Church is *invisible*, since no man can look into another's heart and see whether he believes; B. Because we are nevertheless *assured* by the Scriptures that the Holy Ghost *at all times gathers and preserves* a congregation of believers." This double statement declares invisibility to be an essential attribute of the Church, as the communion of saints.

In view of this clear teaching it strikes one as rather odd when he finds the sentence, in an official document of the Missouri Synod, that the aim of the true visible Church "must be to become like the *Una Sancta*, or to be the visible manifestation of the *Una Sancta*." The question immediately arises: How can there be a *visible manifestation* of an *invisible entity*? For the acceptance of this statement may easily lead to the Roman Catholic conception of the Church or to less dangerous aberrations, such as confronted Dr. Walther and his co-workers in the first decades of Synod's history.

But the objection is now being raised: The Lutheran Church, in its official Confessions, teaches that there are *marks indicating the presence* of the Holy Christian Church in an ecclesiastical organization or church body; does not that fact make the Church visible? But here we can promptly counter with a reference to many analogies in every-day life. For example: There are many indications of the presence of a soul in the human body; does that fact make the soul visible? There are many evidences of life in all organic creatures; does that fact make life a

visible entity? Or, there are many marks and tokens of the presence of electrical power in thousands of devices using this power; does that fact make electricity visible?

And another misgiving has recently been brought forward, namely this: Did not Martin Luther teach a visible manifestation of the Church in many of his writings, particularly in that great classic "Of the Councils and Churches," in which the last part, in a very elaborate manner, deals with the Church?

Now one might write a voluminous monograph on Luther's doctrine of the Church, for there are hundreds of passages in his writings in which he, both incidentally and systematically, presents the teaching of Holy Writ on this article of the Christian faith. And while we know that Luther was no dogmatician or systematic theologian according to the present-day use of the term, except in his Catechisms and in the propositions which he drew up for the customary disputations at the university, yet he had a way of launching forth when he was interested in a subject, and his amazing Bible saturation made it possible for him to present comprehensive explanations of practically every point of Christian doctrine.

One fact stands out with absolute clearness in Luther's writings, namely that *he believed the Church*, in the proper sense of the Word, *to be invisible*. In his exposition of Gal. 5:19 we find these sentences: "Therefore we rightly confess, in our holy Christian faith, that we believe a holy Christian Church. For it is invisible, dwells in the spirit at a place which is accessible to no one, therefore its holiness can not be seen." (St. Louis Ed., 9.702.) In his "Answer to the Super-Christian Book of Emser" Luther declares: "All Christians in the world pray thus: 'I believe in the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints.' If this article is true, it follows that no one can see or feel the holy Christian Church, nor may one say, Behold, here it is, or there. For what one believes, one does not see or perceive." (Vol. 18, 1349.) Again: In Luther's "Answer to the Book of Catharinus" he states: "Just as the Rock, who is without sin, is invisible and spiritual, thus also the Church, which is without sin, must be invisible and spiritual, which one can comprehend by faith alone." (Vol. 18, 1445.) And one more testimony from the Reformer, in his exposition of Psalm 8:4: "Thus we have this before us that this Kingdom is hidden in faith, and, invisible to the eyes, is seen by faith." (Vol. 4, 1425.) And let us add here at once that these testimonies could be augmented by scores of others in the writings of the great Reformer, as even a superficial acquaintance with his works will show.

But while Luther believed and taught that the Church in the proper sense of the term is essentially invisible, he recognized clearly what the Lutheran dogmaticians afterwards presented in a systematic manner, namely that the Christian Church has *certain outward marks* by which it can be recognized. In his exposition of Psalm 110:2 he writes: "These are the true marks whereby one can truly recognize and point out the kingdom of the Lord Christ and the Christian Church, namely where such scepter rules, that is, the ministry of the Gospel which was carried by the apostles into the world and we received it from them." (Vol. 5, 972.) And in his "Answer to the Book of Catharinus" Luther explains: "Now you ask: By what sign must one recognize the Church? . . . Answer: Yes, such a mark is needed, and we also have it, namely, Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and above all the Gospel. These are the Christian's countersign and token. . . . Truly, the Gospel is the one most certain and most noble mark of the Church, much more certain than Baptism and the Lord's Supper, because they are conceived, made, nourished, born, brought up, shepherded, clothed, adorned, strengthened, armed, and preserved by the Gospel alone." (Vol. 18, 1466, 1467.) And we shall include one more reference, namely from Luther's house postil, in a sermon for Christmas Day: "This is the Christian Church, that is baptized and has faith in Christ in the heart, and outwardly conducts itself in the common works, as every one's station and calling requires them. . . . He who would recognize the Christian Church and the Christians, must recognize it in the Word, the Gospel, faith, and the fruits of the Gospel and faith." (Vol. 13, 2612, 2613.)

Here the question may at once be raised: Has not Luther, in these last statements, widened the scope of marks or tokens by which we may recognize the presence of the Christian Church? The answer must be in the negative, but Luther's reference to outward conduct and works also gives us the cue for the understanding of his extensive discussion in that remarkable classic: "Of the Councils and Churches." The last part of this essay bears the editorial heading: "By What Marks the Christian Church Is to Be Recognized," and Luther offers what seems to be, at first blush, *seven tokens or marks* by which the Church may be recognized. However, a careful analysis of the points as given shows that the reader must distinguish, as Luther does, between *marks or tokens* of the essential presence of the Church, on the one hand, and proofs indicating, by *peculiar functions*, that the Word exerts its power by such evidences of confessional discipleship as brotherly love, John 13:35. Luther lists, first, three *essen-*

tial marks, tokens, or characteristics by which the presence of the Church may be recognized, namely the holy Word of God, holy Baptism, and the Sacrament of the Altar. Then he describes four *functions* or works which indicate the presence of the Church, but do not represent a visible side of the Church, namely the Office of the Keys, the holy ministry, public worship, and the fact of persecution. We see at once that these functions are connected with the first essential mark of the Church, namely the Word of God. The difference thus presented may readily be illustrated by the analogy of the human body. The essential marks of a living organism are the respiratory and the circulatory system, even in the state of unconsciousness, but further evidences of life are exhibited in the activities of walking, working, etc. Thus it will readily be seen that Luther does not contradict himself or teach a visible manifestation of the invisible Church, but that he confessed and taught what is found in the Apology, Articles VII and VIII: "Where God's Word is pure, and the Sacraments are administered in conformity with the same, there certainly is the Church, and there are Christians." (*Conc. Trigl.*, 227.)

ON THE UNION FRONT

After Milwaukee

The Lutheran Hospital of Maryland, Baltimore, was dedicated on July 9, 1950, only a few days after the Milwaukee convention, which was supposed to have "settled" the question of religious unionism in the Missouri Synod. The dedicatory rites were unionistic in the new mode, being a religious service with a "presiding" officer in charge, and, this time, with a little of something new added in the way of an address by the governor and some greetings. The Scripture reading was given by the Rev. Lloyd Holt, pastor of Augustana Lutheran Church, the dedicatory address by the Rev. Martin L. Enders, pastor of First English Lutheran Church, and the dedicatory prayer and Benediction were given by the Rev. Carl G. Wolf, Ph. D., pastor of Grace Lutheran Church. None of these clergymen are in doctrinal agreement with the Missouri Synod, or in fellowship with it, and yet the Rev. Eldor A. Cassens, pastor in the Missouri Synod, was the "Presiding Clergyman" of the dedicatory rite. We are informed that brother pastors of the Missouri Synod, beforehand, pleaded with the Rev. Cassens "again and again not to take the chairmanship or participate." But to no avail. And so soon after the Milwaukee convention.

We believe in hospitals. We also believe we ought to avoid unionism more, not less, scrupulously than ever before.

Wheresoe'er We Roam

The international convention of the Walther League, meeting in Colorado, July 2 to 6, immediately following the Milwaukee convention of the Missouri Synod, heard a speech by Dr. John W. Boehne, member of the Board of Directors of the Missouri Synod. This speech was given wide publicity in Lutheran circles. *The Lutheran Outlook* (August, 1950, p. 253) reports as follows:

"Mr. Boehne praised the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod for having abandoned what he said was its previous isolationism in regard to other Christian believers.

" 'We must,' he said, 'recognize that there are other Christians, yes other Lutheran Christians, not of our synodical birth or persuasion, who also lay claim to the citizenship of the Kingdom of God. All of us, in our commendable zeal for purity of doctrine, have forgotten that the body of believers are by no means confined to Lutherans of any single Synod.'

"Mr. Boehne stressed that 'we must never forget that the predominant theme of the Christian Church is love.'

" 'This love,' he said, 'constrains those who would follow Christ not only to love their enemies, but also others, those of other Christian bodies. To me there is something pharisaical about the attitude that I may sit in judgment upon any person who professes Christ, and condemn him as unfit, and with whom I cannot join in common prayer to Almighty God.'

(Correction of a printer's error in the last sentence, a missing line, was supplied from the *Lutheran Standard*, Aug. 5, p. 2.)

Hopeless?

Mr. Boehne evidently believes that at Milwaukee the Missouri Synod abandoned its old position against religious unionism. He gleefully tramples under foot the sacred memory of our fathers in the faith, by implying that they lacked Christian love and possessed a pharisaical attitude and didn't understand the kingdom of God, thus misrepresenting facts. The Missouri Synod spends thousands of dollars each year to maintain bureaus of publicity and public relations, ostensibly to protect itself from misrepresentation and defamation. And at the same time, behold what flows from the lips of one of its own Board of Directors. For the sake of the people of the church, especially the Walther Leaguers, a pub-

lic repudiation of these sentiments of Mr. Boehne on the part of the Praesidium is in place.

Pieper's "Dogmatics"

Dr. Francis Pieper's "Christian Dogmatics," originally German, is being published in English translation, due to the thoughtful efforts of the Centennial Committee of the Missouri Synod. Volume I is on the market.

Dr. Pieper (d. 1931) was a good Scriptural theologian, thoroughly Lutheran, the dean of Missouri Synod theologians in his day.

Excerpts from reviews of the book from outside the Missouri Synod and Synodical Conference, should prove to be of interest to all of us, and especially to those who knew Dr. Pieper in his prime.

The Lutheran (Sept. 6, p. 33-34), magazine of the United Lutheran Church, brings a review by Prof. Otto W. Heick of the Waterloo Seminary in Ontario, in which we find the following:

"Undoubtedly, the work of Pieper shows excellent scholarship. It probably is the most up-to-date exposition of the orthodox theology of the seventeenth century, as interpreted by the Missouri Synod. . . .

"As always, this sort of theology maintains to be Lutheran theology par excellence. But it is precisely here that we should like to register our dissension. In our eyes, the orthodoxy of the seventeenth century was not the towering climax of the Reformation theology but rather a decline of the original impulses of the Reformation. The Gospel was again put into the strait-jacket of Aristotelian philosophy. That means that the relationship between God and man was depersonalized. Once more God was made an object of human investigation.

"In the volume under discussion this trend is especially noticeable in the chapter dealing with the divine attributes. As in all other orthodox systems, this chapter reads as if it were written not by a follower of Luther but rather by a disciple of the patron saint of Catholic theology, Thomas Aquinas. . . ."

The review carries the heading "Rationalism in Theology."

Unpopular in American Lutheran Circles

The Lutheran Outlook (Oct., p. 311-313), official organ of the American Lutheran Conference, brings a review by G. H. Muedeling, pastor in the American Lutheran Church, from which we cull the following:

"This is not the Standard Dogmatics Textbook for which American Lutherans look. The attitude, the perspective, and the goal of the book

preclude that. The vehemence with which all contrary opinions are dismissed is not the attitude which will win friends and influence people religiously. . . .

"Nor is the perspective one which will win itself a place among us. The easy way out of any controversy is to call names . . . any variant opinion in dogmatics is dismissed by saying that only the modernist who doesn't believe in Verbal Inspiration could think differently than the author.

"It is the perspective that is wrong, of course. Dr. Pieper will not admit before he begins, that he intends to tell us what he thinks the Bible says. He expects to tell us what the Bible says. . . .

"Because his basic unsureness (for that is how we understand such a projective technique to be acquired) leads to the identification of his own thinking with Scripture, he gets into some tight corners . . . he has to say this: 'When the "enthusiasts" of ancient and particularly of modern times assert that wine is under all circumstances "poison," we know from Scripture that this is not true' p. 318). . . .

" . . . his basic distrust of philosophy prevented an awareness at all of what the German dogmaticians were trying to get at.

"And the goal of the book is inadequate for us. It sets up men to knock down who are straw men to us, even if not to the original writer. . . .

"The easy answer is that anybody who doesn't believe in Verbal Inspiration is a liberal, hence there are thousands still sneaking around behind the bushes. . . . Nowadays the combined weight of the Luther-scholars is on the side that the non-verbal-inspirationists are more 'Luther'an than the hitherto-orthodox Lutherans. It is a different theological world we are meeting today. This book is not an adequate fronting toward that world."

Which proves that there are thousands of liberals "still sneaking around behind the bushes," and that Pieper still has their number.

A. V. K.

● Review of Publications

The Communion of Saints, a Study of the Origin and Development of Luther's Doctrine of the Church, by Dr. Herman Amberg Preus, Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. 172 pages, 6×9. Price: \$2.00.

Here is a book which should be read by every reader of the *Confessional Lutheran*, for this book touches upon the basic issue now disturbing

the unity and harmony of the Missouri Synod and of the Synodical Conference, namely, the Doctrine of the Church and related issues.

Dr. Preus, Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Symbolics at Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn., correctly defines the Church as "the fellowship of all believers, the communion of all those who have been justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ." (P. 28.) "When this Body of Christ, this spiritual fellowship of believers, manifests its presence in local congregations and outward communities, it does not change the fact that in essence the Church is still the *spiritual* Communion of Saints in which we believe. The failure to keep that fact clear is the basic reason behind the birth and development of the hierarchical conception of Rome." (P. 27.) To this we would add, that the failure to keep that fact clear has been the source of most of the evils that have ever plagued the Christian Church on earth.

In tracing the development of Luther's conception of the Church, Dr. Preus shows that already in his "Lectures on the Psalms" (1513-1516) Luther was far advanced in his conception of the Church as the Communion of Saints. "Invisible Church" does not appear very often in Luther. Much oftener he uses the term 'spiritual Church' in the same sense. But if the Church is 'spiritual' and 'invisible,' how do we know that it is present, and how can we share in its blessings? The answer is twofold. The Church can be perceived only through the eyes of faith. 'Invisible, perceptible through faith is the Church.' (Ps. 103 [104], 13. Weimar Edition of Luther's Works, IV, 189, L. 17.) . . . We read the same arresting declaration in Ps. 91, where Luther says that the work of Christ in the Church, yes, the very structure itself, is invisible and cannot be seen except through spiritual eyes and faith. (W. IV, 81, L. 12.) Thus it is not in essence a visible body, but a spiritual communion (W. IV, 239, L. 23), bound together by a common faith." (P. 49f.) "The second part of the answer is that where the Word is preached, there is the Church. For the Word is never preached without bearing fruit (W. III, 258, L. 38; 259, L. 15.) . . . And here comes an early reference to the question that troubles us most of all, the relation between the visible and the invisible in the Church. The preached Word does not reach all the hearers to win them. Some are won, some reject it. These together form the *visible outward Church* where the good and bad are mingled together. This Luther does not himself call specifically the visible outward Church. He calls it the 'congregation,' in contrast with the 'assembly of the upright.'" (P. 51f.)

Continuing his study of Luther's other writings, Dr. Preus finally summarizes "a few basic conclusions drawn from the clear language of Luther himself. 1) The Church according to its nature is the Communion of Saints, the fellowship of believers, the Body of Christ, the Kingdom of God. 2) As such it is spiritual and invisible, perceptible only to faith. 3) This one Church manifests its presence on earth in assemblies of men where the Word is preached and the Sacraments administered according to the Word of God." (P. 89.)

The Study of Luther's conception of the Church occupies the first seven chapters of this book, and this study we recommend to every one of our readers. However, in the last three chapters, in which Dr. Preus treats of the marks of the Church, by which the presence of the Church is perceptible to faith (we *believe* that the Church is *present* because of the promise of God, that His Word shall not return unto Him void). Dr. Preus unwittingly falls into the error of making the Communion of Saints the quasi-*physical* body of Christ.

Dr. Preus says, "Luther does not answer outright the question whether the Word and Sacraments belong to the nature of the Church. Since, however, he makes it clear that the Church cannot exist without them, it can hardly be misleading to say that they are of the essence of the Church. At least it is hardly going too far to say with Sohm, 'The essence of the "congregation sanctorum" (the Church of Christ) consists in this, that it is the communion of the right administration of Word and Sacraments, that in it and through it (through its agency) Christ, God, lives on earth with His Word.'" (P. 96.)

We have here a confusion of thought. The word "essence" may mean that which is indispensable for the existence of a thing. In that sense we may say that Word and Sacrament belong to the "essence" of the Church. But the word "essence" may also mean that of which a thing consists, that which makes a thing what it is. In this sense the word "essence" is synonymous with the word "nature." It is false to include Word and Sacraments in the definition of the Church, when defining its "essence" in this sense, or to say that Word and Sacrament belong to the "nature" of the Church. Food is indispensable to man's existence. But food does not belong to the nature of man. Nor does food belong to the essence of man in the sense that it is that of which man consists.

This false conception of the Church is the mother of many other false ideas. Some have held that the Communion of Saints embraces all those who use the Word and the Sacraments.

Others have reasoned: Since the administration of Word and Sacrament is visible, therefore the Church has a "visible side" and is both invisible and visible. In our own circles it has been held correctly that "a true visible Church in the absolute sense is that only in which God's Word is preached right and the holy Sacraments are administered in accordance with the Gospel." But such a correct statement has almost immediately been vitiated by the false statement that the aim of the "true visible Church . . . must be . . . to be the visible manifestation of the *Una Sancta*." (President's Theses on the Church, p. 10.) Dr. Preus shows that all such ideas are un-Lutheran. He says: "With all the emphasis he places on these marks of the Church, Luther never for a moment means that they are to make the Church visible. They only make it perceptible to faith so that the believer may know where to find his own." (P. 98.)

Dr. Preus entitles the ninth chapter "The Experience of Holy Communion." But there he makes the un-Lutheran statement: "There must be a restoration of the Sacrament to a central place in the Church's worship life." (P. 119.) We have called this an "un-Lutheran" statement, for the Apology says: "For of all acts of worship that is the greatest, most holy, most necessary, and highest, which God has required as the highest in the First and Second Commandment, namely, to preach the Word of God . . . The chief service of God is to teach the Gospel." (Trig., p. 327.)

It is only through the Gospel that man is brought to faith in the forgiveness of sins merited by Christ. Through faith and as a *result* or *effect* of the forgiveness of sins we are united with Christ and become members of His body. Such faith is then strengthened in us by eating and drinking Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper. But neo-Lutherans contend that union with the body of Christ is first effected in the Lord's Supper and for that reason they would give the Lord's Supper "the central place in the Church's worship life."

Dr. Preus makes the further un-Lutheran statement, that in the Lord's Supper the Christian "begins to 'experience' the community of Christians, a community whose roots reach down into the very wounds of Christ. And with the Blood of Christ coursing through their veins, they are drawn closer than brothers. For they are the Body of Christ." (P. 120f.) Again he says: "With the Word she (the Church) silences my accusing conscience. With the blessed Sacrament she enfolds me in the embrace of all His saints. With them I am one with Christ. I am a member of His body. He is the Heart whose re-

deeming blood streams through the veins of my soul, washing away every stain of my sin." (P. 127.)

Here we have three false, neo-Lutheran ideas. (1) That the Lord's Supper bestows a greater, or at least a different blessing than the Gospel. Dr. Preus contends that with the Word (either through the Gospel or through Absolution) I am assured of my forgiveness. With the Word the Church "silences my accusing conscience." But through the Lord's Supper I become a member of Christ's body. (2) In the Lord's Supper I begin to "experience" the Communion of Saints, for through eating and drinking Christ's body and blood I am somehow so joined with Christ, so that His blood now courses "through the veins of my soul." Here we have a physical or at least a quasi-physical, Capernaïtic conception of the Lord's Supper. (3) Through the coursing of Christ's blood through the veins of my soul "every stain of my sin" is washed away.

The latter thought reminds us of the Ancient Mysteries, in some of which the initiates rent living animals with their teeth, thinking that by thus assimilating the life of the god supposedly resident in the flesh of such animals, they were being intimately united with their god and were no longer mere men but divinized men. A somewhat similar thought was later found in the Christian Church after the fourth century. By eating and drinking Christ's body and blood in the Lord's Supper we become members of Christ's body so that through His blood coursing through our veins we are divinized or deified. This same un-Scriptural sacramentalism is, sorry to say, now also being spread in our midst. It, too, is a product of the false doctrine of the Church. But we are surprised that Dr. Preus, student of Luther that he is, has fallen into this error. We can ascribe it only to his false conception of the "essence" of the Church. D.

● What Our Readers Say

"I am enclosing the money for my subscription and hope that your work of witnessing against the false proposed union of the ALC and the Missouri Synod will continue.

"Knowing what is being taught in the ALC seminaries, I am convinced that such a union would be a great catastrophe for the Lutheran Church. I have the feeling that even the ungodly desire for such a union has the seed of spreading the weeds of error to a terrible extent.

"The Missouri Synod is just now coming into a position whereby it can witness to the Lutheran Church abroad, and what fools you would be if you allowed this chance to be lost and weaken your front and your whole program.

"Being in a town of two Lutheran Churches, I know the longing of certain people for one Lutheran Church; but who can be so dumb as to believe that our unionists will stop with Lutheran Unity? Our unionists will not stop, just as we see with the World Council of Churches. They will lead us back to the same things as the Prussian Union which the fathers of American Lutheranism fought. We need but look at the ghastly sight of that union in Europe today to be filled with a feeling of regret.

"There are within the ALC many who have not bowed their knee to Baal, and the *only* way to strengthen their stand is if the Missouri Synod rejects union in the strongest terms." — A Pastor of the American Lutheran Church.

"I am interested in your advocacy of fidelity to confessions." — Professor, American Lutheran Church.

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A Merry Christmas!

The staff of the CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN wishes its readers a very blessed Christmas. May the peace of God which passes understanding keep our hearts and minds in these hectic days in which men and churchmen who have no real peace to offer cry peace where there is no peace. May God through Christ also keep us in good conscience and renew within us day by day that Christian testimony which alone can be helpful toward setting right a world and a church in which there is so much that is wrong. In short, the peace of Christ be with you alway!

The "COMMON CONFESSION"

Must Be Repudiated

THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE "STATEMENT" OF THE "44" MUST BE REJECTED

EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI SYNOD